Gloria to CEOs: Give poor youths jobs

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

TUESDAY, JULY 3, 2001 ★ 34 PAGES 3 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 205 ₱15

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GMA gives ₱10B to AFP

Jeepney drivers seek 50¢ fare hike

BY RONNEL W. DOMINGO, CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA AND NELSON F. FLORES

A TRANSPORT group announced yesterday that it would seek a fare increase of at least 50 centavos after the country's oil refiners raised their prices for the second time this year.

Petron Corp. and Caltex Philippines raised the prices of their petroleum products by 37 to 38 centavos per liter a day after Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. increased its prices by the same amount.

The militant Pinagkaisang Samahan ng mga Tsuper at Opereytors Nationwide (Piston) said that a 50-centavo increase in jeepney fare would be barely enough to cushion the effects of the oil price increase on the public transport sector.

"This latest increase is too much for us," Piston chair Medardo Roda said.

On May 23, the oil companies raised their prices by 42 to 49 centavos per liter.

"The President should do something about this. (The situation) is much worse now than during the time of Estrada," Roda said.

But the Federation of Jeepney Operators and Drivers Associations of the Philippines (Fejodap) said it was not inclined to ask for a fare increase because of its negative impact on the economy.

The Land Transportation and Franchising Regulatory Board (LTFRB) is currently hearing the petition of another transport group, the Philippine Confederation of Drivers Organizations-Association of Concerned Transport Operators (PCDO-ACTO), for a fare increase. The group filed the petition after Caltex raised its prices in May.

Earlier in the day, members of

JEEPNEY/ A16

REUTERS

LARGER-THAN-LIFE mural of President Macapagal makes an arresting backdrop to the marching officers and men of the Philippine Air Force as part of its 54th anniversary rites on Monday.

President's priority bill to raise soldiers' salaries

BY JULIET L. JAVELLANA AND TJ BURGONIO

THE MILITARY, particularly the Philippine Air Force, had been "doing so much with so little," President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said, declaring that she would be the second commander in chief surnamed Macapagal to modernize the PAF and give its men and women higher pay.

The President promised her full support to the ill-equipped PAF on the occasion of its 54th anniversary. In a speech delivered at Villamor Air Base, she ordered the immediate release of P10 billion earmarked for the modernization of the Armed Forces, and announced the grant by the US government of an additional C-130 cargo plane and five refurbished Huey helicopters.

She also said she had "agreed in principle" to acquire air sensor surveillance for the PAF to thwart not only hostage-taking by the extremist Abu Sayyaf but also smuggling, illegal fishing and the entry of foreign poachers into Philippine territory.

To upgrade the living standards of soldiers, the President announced that she would submit to the 12th Congress an administration priority bill seeking to raise the salary of soldiers to the level of teachers.

"Within the decade, we should have no more impoverished soldiers," she said, adding: "I trust that the bill I signed into law last March granting tax exemptions on benefits and allowances of the AFP is now being implemented."

During the program, PAF chief Lt. Gen. Benjamin Defensor extolled the President's late father, President Diosdado Macapagal, for seeing the command through one of its most glorious periods.

The President urged the PAF "to carry on with your dedication, professionalism and inspiring courage, and be assured that you have the full support of the second Macapagal who is commander in chief."

She also put an end to the many years of battle by 224 soldiers' families living in a portion of the National Shrine, site of the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

She said she would reissue a proclamation issued by her father allocating a portion of the shrine to soldiers' housing, and which was set aside during the Marcos regime. *(See story on Page 16.)*

The President said she decided to increase the AFP modernization fund this year

GMA/ A16

'Military operations hinder release of hostages'

BY ALEXANDER M. YOUNG, JULIE ALIPALA-INOT AND CARLITO PABLO

ISABELA CITY, Basilan—An informant claiming to have direct contact with the Abu Sayyaf yesterday said reports of the impending release of Dos Palmas hostages Lalaine Chua and Luis Bautista were "mere speculation."

The informant, who asked that he not be named, said he spoke yesterday with Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Abu Sabaya, who insisted that the bandit group was still holding the two hostages.

According to the informant, continued military offensives are hindering the release, which a self-styled negotiator earlier said was due in 48 hours.

"(The Abu Sayyaf wants) the military to stay away from the release site, even if temporarily, so that Chua and Bautista can be turned over to their families and the government," he said.

The informant also said Sabaya just laughed off reports that the Moro Islamic Liberation Front had custody of the two hostages.

Reports floated yesterday that after accepting the ransom payments for Chua and Bautista, Sabaya turned them over to an MILF "commander" named Usman Lidjal so the secessionist group could also demand ransom.

Another report said the two had been "intercepted" by the MILF group.

But MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu de

MILITARY/ A16

Ador story sparks network war

BY CATHY C. YAMSUAN AND LEAH SALTERIO

FOR GIVING interviews to only one radio station, the former civilian agent known only as Ador has sparked some more verbal swordplay between network rivals ABS-CBN and GMA-7.

The latest dueling

ADOR STORY/ A15

'Ador' wants new test; Ping seeks probe

BY JEROME ANING, ARMAND N. NOCUM AND CATHY C. YAMSUAN

"ADOR," a former civilian agent of the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force, last night demanded to take an "independent" polygraph test witnessed by representatives of the press, fearing that he failed one administered earlier yesterday at the National Bureau of Investigation.

Ador (not his real name) voluntarily took the lie detector test and underwent another round of interrogation in the hope of bolstering his claims that Sen. Panfilo Lacson and his top aides had hatched a plot to destabilize the Macapagal administration and had ordered a number of kidnappings.

On his first day of work as a senator, Lacson, a former Philippine National Police chief, said he would ask his fellow lawmakers to investigate Ador's charges.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, who chairs the national security and defense committee, said he would co-author a resolution seeking an inquiry.

"To (Lacson), it is crucial that the issue be investigated, it should not be left hanging," Biazon told reporters.

In a news briefing, Lacson said he was determined to find out who is pulling the strings of the former agent, who Lacson alleges is acting on the orders of PNP intelligence chief Reynaldo Berroya.

Lacson said he was sure that Berroya is "very much part of it, but who is behind Berroya is an-

ADOR WANTS/ A15

ILUSORIO BURIAL

Baguio club security tightened

BY VINCENT CABREZA
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—The exclusive Baguio Country Club yesterday enforced abnormally tight security, asking for police reinforcements as it prepared to receive the ashes of its founder and chair, 88-year-old Potenciano Ilusorio.

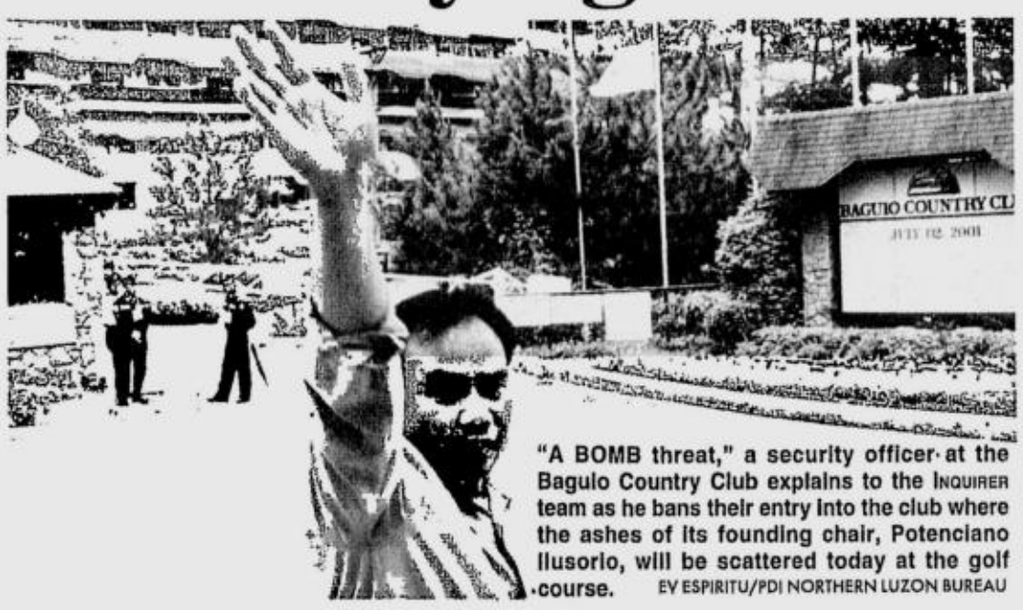
A security guard at the club's gates said that there was a "bomb threat" to explain the unusually thorough vehicle checks.

But as a club member said, the real bomb to watch out for is how the six Ilusorio children and their mother would resolve a long-running family feud that will have serious implications for the 96-year-old country club.

"This is what we expect for a bombshell really, not the scattering of Nanoy Ilusorio's ashes," he said.

Ilusorio died on Thursday and was cremated the same day. His death left unresolved a family

BAGUIO/ A16



"A BOMB threat," a security officer at the Baguio Country Club explains to the INQUIRER team as he bans their entry into the club where the ashes of its founding chair, Potenciano Ilusorio, will be scattered today at the golf course. EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

JDV is it in race for speakership

ROCKY NAZARENO AND JULIET L. JAVELLANA

REP. Jose De Venecia is it.

With his unswerving pursuit of the speakership of the House of Representives in the incoming 12th Congress that opens on July 23, De Venecia is way ahead of his nine rivals in the numbers game. They have withdrawn one after the other in the past month.

Like an ardent suitor who will not take no for an answer, De Venecia, who's the chair of the ruling Lakas-NUCD party, is now reportedly assured of 140 votes.

More significant, President

JDV/ A15

Second FRONT PAGE

Gloria to CEOs: Give poor youths jobs

BY CHRISTINE AVENDAÑO

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday asked the country's biggest corporations to help provide emergency employment for some 300,000 out-of-school and out-of-work youth in Metro Manila to keep them from joining mass actions like the May 1 siege of Malacañang.

Speaking before members of the League of Corporate Foundations Inc. (LCFI), the President said she was embarking on a "visible" emergency employment program for the urban poor youth.

She urged the corporate executives to increase employment opportunities for this "special sub-sector" in their companies or in their foundations.

"We are talking here of the *kanto* boy types who, if we cannot provide them with emergency employment, will always be available as cannon fodder for political adventurists," the President said in her speech before the executives gathered to celebrate the second annual Corporate Social Responsibility Week.

The May 1 dawn attack on Malacañang by some 50,000 supporters of jailed ex-President Joseph Estrada was mostly made up of urban poor youth.

"(W)e need this instant gratification type of emergency employment to pacify a social volcano," the President said, noting that it would take time to implement the necessary structural reforms to fight poverty and provide "lasting employment opportunities."

The emergency employment program is to be patterned after the one established by the President's late father, former President Diosdado Macapagal, and the Tennessee Valley Authority which American President Franklin Delano Roosevelt set up in the 1930s to cope with the Great Depression.

'Gangs'

"The difference is that we are not doing this for the whole country, we are doing this for a very particular sub-sector of our society, the out-of-school, out-of-work urban poor youth in Metro Manila," she said.

The President said this group should be organized into "brotherhoods or gangs."

"Not the Sputnik-type gang whose members get together to do drugs, to rape, to rob and to kidnap, but rather work gangs to repair the leaking roofs or broken railings of community tenement houses or clean the drainage canals of the slum neighborhoods or act as sentries in community public schools," she said.

The program is to be implemented by the Department of Interior and Local Government as well as the Philippine National Police.

Reach out

At the same forum, the chief executives of the country's leading corporations presented the President with a manifesto expressing the business community's "commitment to corporate social responsibility and volunteerism."

The CEOs acknowledged that recent events underscored the need for them to reach out and help alleviate the plight of the poor and called on other business leaders to make the same commitment.

They said they would continue to support the government's fight against poverty through the programs of their member organizations.

These programs entail providing scholarship grants, modernizing schools, medical assistance, setting up entrepreneurial endeavors for the underprivileged, responding to natural disasters, promoting environmental management toward sustainable development and being sterling examples of corporate social responsibility.

The CEOs also pledged to provide opportunities for volunteer work in social development programs and actively promote volunteerism for the benefit of the underprivileged.

LFCI is made up of 50 foundations from leading corporations like Ayala Corp., Petron Inc., San Miguel Corp. and Toyota Motor Phil. Its president is Ma. Cecilia Alcantara.

PRESIDENT Macapagal receives a framed copy of the INQUIRER's supplement on the League of Corporate Foundations during the organization's annual assembly yesterday. From left are league officers Malou Erni, president Ma. Cecilia Alcantara, Ms Macapagal, Presidential Management Staff chief Vicky Garchitorena, Glecy Cuenco and Ester Fida. JOAN BONDOC

DOJ seeks reversal of live coverage ban

JUSTICE department officials need to convince at least two Supreme Court justices of the merits of live media coverage of former President Joseph Estrada's plunder trial, to reverse the high tribunal's decision not to air the proceedings.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez noted the justices' vote of 8-6 against the petition filed by the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster sa Pilipinas calling for live media coverage of the trial "was a close one."

"The 8-6 decision indicates there was a conflict of opinion among the justices," Perez said.

Perez had earlier announced the DOJ's plan to file a motion for reconsideration of the decision with the Supreme Court.

To obtain a reversal, Perez must convince at least two of the eight justices who voted against the KBP petition—*ponente* Jose Vitug, Santiago Kapunan, Vicente Mendoza, Bernardo Pardo, Arturo Buena, Minerva Gonzaga-Reyes, Sabino de Leon and Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez.

Six justices voted in favor of the KBP petition. Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago was on leave.

In voting against live media coverage, the high court noted that television "can work profound changes in the behavior of the people it focuses on."

Instead of allowing live coverage, the SC said it would be better if Estrada "receives a verdict solely on the basis of a just and dispassionate judgment."

Perez said there is a need to "reiterate the right of the public to know what is going on."

"We are not talking of covering the trial for the sake of coverage but of the people's constitutional right to public information. We will point out that there is a need for full discussion," Perez said.

"We are willing to adopt the suggestion (that) only one camera and one tape recorder would be used to cover the trial," he said.

The SC decision was seen to favor Estrada and his son, Jinggoy, who stands accused with him in several cases.

Yesterday, a congressman allied with Estrada filed a bill prohibiting "unnecessary publicity" of pending investigations and court proceedings.

Rep. Gilbert Teodoro (NPC, Tarlac) filed House Bill No. 184 which "provides for the rights of the accused and persons under investigation for the commission of a crime."

According to Teodoro, "there is an urgent need to codify a comprehensive set of safeguards for the protection of every person accused, arrested or under investigation for the commission of a crime."

While most of the provisions in Teodoro's bill already exist in criminal procedures and rules of court, it was noted that Article 11, which prohibits unnecessary publicity, was a new proposal.

"Without prejudice to the principle of a free press and the public's right to information, public prosecutors and administrative investigation agents shall ensure that their investigations and inquiries are not conducted with unnecessary publicity," the bill proposed.

Teodoro's bill underscored that "the court shall protect the accused from unnecessary publicity by controlling the release of information related to the facts and conduct of the case."

Meanwhile, a leading watchdog group monitoring the prosecution of Estrada said it supports the DOJ plan to appeal the SC decision.

"The ban should be lifted in favor of the people's right to know," said Plunder Watch convenor Fr. Joe Dizon.

Other groups demanding live coverage of the trial are the College Editors Guild of the Philippines, the Organization of United Solicitors for Truth and Estrada's Resignation (Ouster), Kilusang Mayo Uno and the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan.

'Second opinion' sought on Estradas' condition

DOCTORS at the Philippine General Hospital will be asked to give a "second opinion" on the medical condition of ousted President Joseph Estrada and his son, Jinggoy, to buttress the findings of the Veterans Memorial Medical Center.

In a four-page urgent ex-parte motion, government lawyers at the Office of the Ombudsman asked the Sandiganbayan to direct "the PGH, through its director, to send a team to examine the Estradas and to submit its report immediately to the anti-graft court."

The prosecutors are seeking the second opinion in a bid to show that the Estradas are healthy enough to be detained at Camp Crame and the veterans hospital or the police camp in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

One of the Estradas' co-accused, lawyer Edward Serapio, is currently being held at Camp Crame.

The government lawyers said that, judging by his appearance at his arraignment on perjury charges on June 27, Estrada was "in sound physical and mental condition." His doctors, however, had said the ex-president was suffering from arthritic knees and high cholesterol.

In the case of Jinggoy, the prosecutors said, "the entire nation saw that he is even healthier than his father," when the young Estrada spent "almost six days of a hectic schedule while on furlough in San Juan to wrap up his mayoral affairs.

Jinggoy has been at the veterans hospital on the advice of his doctors who said he needs a Thallium Nuclear Cardiac Imaging and, possibly, a coronary angiogram at the Makati Medical Center.

"There is now a pressing need to have the accused Estradas transferred from the veterans hospital to Camp Crame which also has a government hospital," the prosecutors said.

Pinoys nabbed for corporate spying in Dubai

DUBAI—Emirati prosecutors are continuing their interrogation of 19 people, including an undisclosed number of Filipinos, detained in raids on three British-run corporate research companies, the British Embassy said Monday.

"Questioning continues. Those arrested, including eight Britons, have been detained since the June 26 raids and are being treated well," said the British Embassy in Dubai, a federation member of the United Arab Emirates.

"Consular officers from the embassy are expecting to see them on Monday," an embassy spokeswoman said. "The others held include nationals from India, Jordan, Morocco, the Philippines and Yemen." *AFP*

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Quiet Mayon belies danger ahead

BY REY NASOL, JOB BELEN AND ROLY EMBILE
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LEGAZPI CITY—The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology reiterated yesterday its call for residents to stay out of the six-kilometer permanent danger zone (PDZ) and the eight-kilometer extended danger zones (EDZ) around Mayon because of another buildup of magma underneath the volcano.

Those living outside the danger zone can return to their homes, said Cedric Daep, chief of the Provincial Disaster Management Office (PDMO).

Daep said there was a decline in sulfur dioxide emission and fewer quakes at the volcano in the last 24 hours, but Mayon's inflated edifice indicates the presence of magma and accumulating pressure underneath.

Mayon was quiet as the seismic network detected only five low frequency-type volcanic quakes and 13 high-frequency short duration harmonic tremors.

Few rockfalls occurred but this was expected as newly deposited lava continued to cool.

Only a thin and diffused steam plume emanated from the crater and this coincided with very low gas output rates of 840 tons per day compared to the previous 8,720 tons per day.

High likelihood

"These indicators of calm, though, are belied by the inflated state of the edifice as shown by ground deformation measurements," said resident volcanologist Ed Laguerta.

Considering the anomalous, rapid decline of sulfur dioxide emission rates from the previous 8,740 tons per day and ongoing significant inflation of the volcanic cone, there is still a high likelihood of more explosive eruptions in the coming days, he said. Alert level 5 is still in effect, Laguerta added.

Laguerta said the danger zones must remain free of people because new lava and pyroclastic deposits remain unstable and may produce secondary explosions, or be mobilized as landslide-induced secondary pyroclastic flows and avalanches.

If, however, a gradual decline in volcanic activity is observed in the following days, Phivolcs said it may consider shortening the extended danger zones from an eight to seven-kilometer radius.

EVACUEES from villages near Mayon Volcano wait in line for handouts from a private relief agency Monday. AP PHOTO

Two patients

Meanwhile, the old woman and little girl who received special gifts from First Gentleman Mike Arroyo during his birthday last week are now in the care of physicians.

Mr. Arroyo had ordered his Bicol staffers to personally assist four-month-old Alaiza Nuñez, who is suffering from a deformed lower extremity.

Nuñez is scheduled to undergo orthopedic surgery at the Bicol Regional Training and Teaching Hospital in the next few days.

Her father, Charlie Nuñez of Bonga, a village perceived to be the most vulnerable to pyroclastic and mud flows, thanked Arroyo through a phone patch to the latter's weekly radio program "Kaibigang Atty. Mike" over dzRH Sunday.

Cresencia Alarmis, 86, of barangay Buyuan, who was in need of medicines and treatment for her asthma, has received the attention she needed following a brief conversation with Arroyo.

Alarmis, aided by her granddaughter, Emma Abriquez and her siblings, had sought temporary shelter at the Bagumbayan Elementary School and is now confined at BRTTH for medication.

Arroyo spent his birthday here Wednesday visiting several evacuation centers, including the Gogon Elementary School where he spotted Alaiza.

He brought with him truckloads of foodstuff and two medical teams from the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office.

Some 45,000 evacuees now crowd 31 evacuation centers in Legazpi City. As of Friday, Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor estimated damage to crops from the latest eruptions at P10 million. *With an AP report*

For Imelda, party goes on after PCGG 'blinks'

BY BLANCHE S. RIVERA

IMELDA Marcos had every reason to party at her family's sequestered estate in Olot, Tolosa, Leyte, after the Presidential Commission on Good Government decided to loosen its hold on the sprawling property in time for her birthday yesterday.

Despite having earlier declared that it would "regain control" of the sequestered Marcos assets, the PCGG softened its position and said the widow of dictator Ferdinand Marcos and her guests could stay at the palatial rest house at the resort while they were in the province.

According to Commissioner Ruben Carranza Jr., the PCGG did not mean to prohibit Marcos from using the 45-hectare beach property but only wanted "to control its use" by the former first lady and her friends.

Carranza, who was in Olot last week to inspect the property, said the PCGG and Marcos would have to work together if either of them wanted access to the estate.

"We're not the owners, we're just the sequestering authority," Carranza said in explaining the PCGG decision to allow Marcos to use the property. "Sequestration is not ownership, but neither is her ownership absolute."

"There's a pavilion. If she wants to use that (for the party), she can use it," he said.

Carranza also said the PCGG's main thrust was to prevent the dissipation of the Marcos assets pending litigation, and to protect the property in physical and legal terms.

"It's on a case-to-case basis exactly because we can't say if future requests (by Marcos) would be granted," he said, adding that the PCGG would examine the place for damage and losses after her use.

Last Thursday, Carranza inspected the property and ordered the caretakers to padlock the 12 rooms of the guesthouse and the main doors of the rest house to "correct the anomalous practice" of allowing Marcos to use the place whenever she wanted.

He said the padlocks would ensure that the Marcoses would not have "unilateral access" to the disputed property, as they had in the past.

But two days later, the PCGG allowed Marcos to celebrate her birthday at the resort with her friends.

"Please be informed that Mrs. Imelda Marcos and company arrived at Tacloban City on Saturday, June 30, 2001, and are presently occupying the rest house and guesthouse at Olot, Tolosa, Leyte," Renor Dauag, PCGG officer in Eastern Visayas, said in a memo to Carranza.

"Proper coordination with our watchman was made for the opening of the padlocks of the doors and rooms of the two houses," Dauag said.

Marcos, who was scheduled to leave for abroad yesterday to seek medical treatment, had postponed her trip to challenge what she described as the "shocking" PCGG order barring her and her family from the property.

But Carranza said he "cannot understand" why Marcos should be shocked.

He said she acknowledged the PCGG's authority over the property when she asked the commission for permission to stay there during the 50th anniversary of the Leyte landing in 1994.

Marcos has been using the resort to entertain friends in the province since then.

Loi wants death for poll cheats

THIS could be reason enough for "operators" and their contacts in the Commission on Elections to think twice before tampering with the people's votes.

Sen. Loi Ejercito, whose camp had accused the administration of massive fraud in the last elections, has filed a bill that would send Comelec personnel and other public officials to death row for participating in "*dagdag-bawas*" (vote-padding and shaving).

The bill seeks to amend Article 22, Section 261 of Batas Pambansa 881, or the Omnibus Election Code, by including vote-shaving and padding among the prohibited acts under the section.

The INQUIRER was furnished a copy of the bill by former immigration commissioner Rufus Rodriguez, Ejercito's counsel.

"Senator Ejercito will push for the immediate passage of this bill because it is high time that election fraud is made a heinous crime," Rodriguez said.

Rodriguez noted that Ejercito herself was a victim of *dagdag-bawas*, which allegedly benefited the senatorial candidates of the People Power Coalition, particularly Sen. Ralph Recto. Ejercito has filed four petitions contesting a total of 180,000 votes for Recto.

The bill proposes a penalty of imprisonment of 20 to 40 years for those found guilty of "*dagdag-bawas*." Participation may mean inducing or attempting to induce any member of the board of canvassers to tamper with the votes by increasing or decreasing the number received by a candidate.

If the offender is a public official, the penalty shall be death under the proposed law.

"This practice should not be condoned by the government, but instead sanctioned to the full extent of the law," Ejercito said. *Gerald G. Lacuarta*

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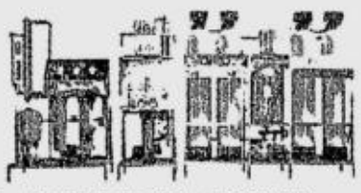

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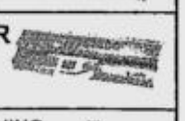

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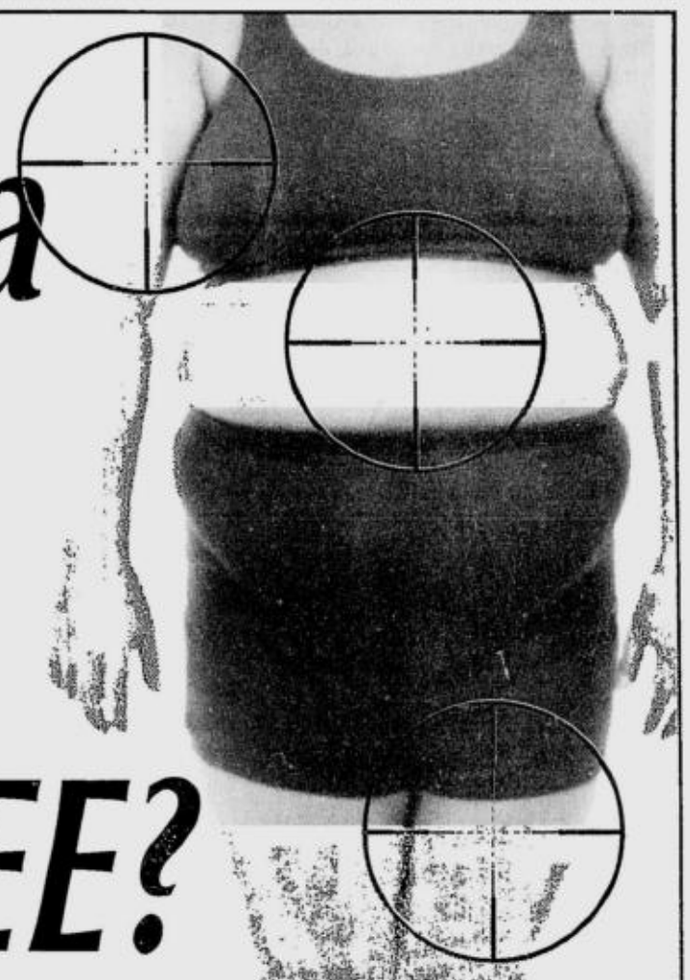

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Loi, Ping supporters come a-collectin'

IT'S payback time for supporters of neophyte Senators Loi Ejercito and Panfilo Lacson.

As the two started their first day of work as senators yesterday, their staffers had to contend with numerous persons trooping to their offices to ask for money, medicines, jobs and referrals.

By early yesterday afternoon, some 50 persons had visited the office of Lacson, who was the only new senator to report for work yesterday.

Ejercito received fewer than 20 visitors.

One of them, Manolito Arceto, was not shy about admitting that he was asking for money since he used to be a campaign coordinator for the Estradas.

Failing to find the former first lady at her second floor office at the Senate, Arceto said he was going to look for her at her home on Polk Street in Greenhills, San Juan.

"I will just see her at home," he said in Filipino.

The Commission on Elections had earlier reported that Ejercito spent the most to get elected.

However, those who went to see the two new senators yesterday went home empty-handed.

The staffers of both senators said they just took down the names of the aid-seekers. They said this was because they were still in the middle of setting up their offices.

Senate reception personnel said with the way things are going, Ejercito and Lacson are likely to beat Sen. Robert Barbers' record for the most number of daily visitors.

Senate personnel attributed this to Barbers' style where he personally attends to the people who seek him out for help.

From 80 to 100 people make their way to Barbers' office daily.

The senators who are least bothered by the needy are Senators Juan Flavier, Rodolfo Biazon and Teresa Aquino-Oreta, who have posted on their doors notices that they don't entertain visitors asking for medicines, jobs and referrals. *Armand N. Nocum*

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(PDI -- July 2 & 3, 2001)

Explain cut in gov't execs' pay, business leaders ask GMA

BY VINCENT CABREZA
Northern Luzon Bureau
AND CLARISSA S. BATIÑO

BAGUIO CITY—Leading business leaders yesterday asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to "clearly explain" a Malacañang order cutting the paychecks of senior executives of government corporations, saying that it was prudent to raise the standards of state-owned firms through competitive salaries.

"The government is able to pirate very professional, highly trained executives because of the high pay. It is possible that government financial institutions need very special talents, particularly since these executives are hired to earn revenues for the government," said Miguel Varela, president of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc. (PCCI).

Varela gave the advice at a briefing here in which business leaders were told that government spending had been unusually "slow" since Ms Macapagal assumed office in January.

Rationalization

As this developed, the finance department has asked six of 14 government institutions with the highest paid executives to submit by the end of the month a scheme to rationalize the compensation schemes for their heads and senior officers.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the government would concentrate on rationalizing the compensation scheme of these 14 government agencies. Six of the 14 are financial institutions under the DOF.

The President issued Memorandum 20 on June 26 ordering a suspension of salary increases and benefits for all government-owned and controlled corporations, and government financial institutions and their subsidiaries. She also required the heads of government agencies to rationalize their pay structures.

The government said there was a need to re-channel scarce resources to such areas as poverty reduction, infrastructure and peace and order.

Camacho said he would meet with the head of the six GFIs within the week, but not the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas as the BSP was autonomous and not covered by his department.

Based on data from the Budget Department and the Commission on Audit, the biggest-earning government executives are those heading the two state-run pension funds and the BSP.

The GFI heads and BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura have said they were open to a review and rationalization of their compensation packages.

Some of them pointed out, however, that their salaries were not paid by the government and should not be covered by the order.

Camacho said, however, that even if the compensation was not covered by the budget, a rationalized pay scheme would leave more room for these institutions to increase the dividends that they turn over to the government.

Varela said the government would need to weigh the advantages of a private-sector consultant who could have been proven to be capable of drawing in "clear revenues" for government.

He said the pay scale might have been matched against the operating fees of comparative Asian corporations.

"I think there is a lot of fairness in (issuing Memorandum 20). But we need to know what study they used to base (the pay cuts on)," he stressed.

Felicito Payumo, the chair of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority who was at the Baguio meeting, said he would not question Memorandum 20.

Payumo, who has an annual take of P2.15 million, claimed that his allowances, worth P100,000, have been funneled into a special foundation dedicated to the local Aeta community near the Subic Bay Freeport Zone in Zambales.

"They (the Aetas) will be most affected by the order," Payumo said.

Race against time

The PCCI hosted the Baguio leg of a nationwide briefing on Philippine business and economic prospects, which tackled the government's "race against time" to plug a P145-billion budget deficit left by the administration of jailed ex-president Estrada.

Budget Undersecretary Mario Relampagos said the government disbursed only P9.7 billion in the last two quarters because of the May elections, which automatically suspended government projects.

He argued that the United States economic slowdown, and an apparent recession in Japan, had pressured the government into cutting down new spending outside of the already huge deficit that the Macapagal-Arroyo administration inherited.

He said the Department of Budget and Management is in the middle of conducting another inventory to rationalize the government's fleet of motor vehicles.

It is also preparing a "sectoral efficiency and effectivity review targeting current infrastructure projects.

"We are about to review all projects of government in order to determine which project will contribute to the desired (government agenda). Ongoing projects with low contributions will be kicked out (of the priority list) and will not be funded," he said.

The review team will also monitor the financial performances of all "spending government agencies," in order to outline a "performance-based budget system."

Government had been operating on a worst-case scenario, with the réduction of its growth targets from 3.8 percent to 3.3 percent.

"This means a lower revenue base and a lower tax collection," Relampagos said. *With a report from Jovelyn Reyes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

This early, bill is filed to amend Constitution

WITH the 12th Congress set to start in 20 days, Tawi-tawi Rep. Sonaya Jaafar has filed a resolution seeking amendments to the 1987 Constitution, including a shift to the federal system of government.

In House Resolution No. 4, Jaafar sought the creation of a Constitutional Commission that will propose amendments to the Constitution.

Jaafar explained that a shift to a federal system of government would be the most "fundamental and sound political and structural reform" needed to solve the armed conflicts in Mindanao.

"(There is) a disturbing scenario of armed hostilities in Mindanao and an impasse in the hostage-taking incidents that adversely affect the country's image abroad," Jaafar said.

She said "the roots of the conflict are deeply embedded in our history and culture in Mindanao."

Jaafar said the roots of the conflict would not "whither away" if the country maintained the presidential system of government.

Besides Jaafar, other members of the House have filed bills before the 12th Congress formally opens this month.

Negros Oriental Rep. Emilio Macias beat his colleagues to the draw and filed the first three bills in the House.

HB No. 1 seeks to modernize the health care delivery system in the country.

As of yesterday, 37 House members had filed 335 resolutions and bills. Bukidnon Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri and Aurora Rep. Bellaflor Angara-Castillo filed the most number of bills at 42 each. *Rocky Nazareno*

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MITSUBISHI MOTORS

MEMBERS of the League of Urban Poor for Action (Lupa) lunch on *tuyo* and rice at Mendiola to illustrate the plight of the urban poor as part of their anti-demolition campaign against President Macapagal's declaration that Mendiola Bridge will be turned into a "zone of peace." JESS YUSON

Urban poor say Mendiola anything but 'zone of peace'

BY JEROME ANING

A MILITANT urban poor group yesterday criticized President Macapagal-Arroyo's proclamation of the historic Don Chino Roces (formerly Mendiola) Bridge and its environs as a "zone of peace."

"There can be no culture of peace as long as the government does not listen to the plight of the needy and violates their basic human and democratic rights," the League of Urban Poor for Action (Lupa) said.

About 100 members of Lupa staged a picket on the bridge yesterday morning to protest the ongoing demolition of the homes of the poor in many parts of the metropolis and to protest the latest round of fuel price increases.

"(The President) is a comedian. How can there be peace if we are here rallying at Mendiola?" asked Lupa secretary general Jess del Prado.

"How can she stick with her new *pakulo* (gimmick)?" he asked.

The ralliers ate a lunch of half a *tuyo* (dried fish) and rice for each protester to illustrate the plight of the urban poor.

"Many urban poor families cannot even buy a whole piece of *tuyo* for every member of their family as food prices have skyrocketed due to the worsening economic crisis," Del Prado said.

The time would come, he said, when the poor would not even be able to purchase rice or salt.

The group also distributed leaflets to passersby leaflets titled, "Mendiola peaceful? Bwahahahaha!"

Last week, the Chief Executive went to the bridge, which leads to Malacañang Palace, and declared it a "zone of peace."

The bridge has been the site of rallies by various groups since the '60s. It was the site of bloody student rallies during the early '70s, the massacre of protesting farmers in 1987 and, more recently, the dispersal of the thousands of supporters of ousted President Joseph Estrada during an aborted attack on the Presidential Palace.

Filipino seaman killed in explosion

KUALA LUMPUR—A Filipino crewman was killed and two seamen were missing after several explosions rocked two ships in Tawau port in Malaysia's eastern Sabah state, the Bernama news agency said yesterday.

Bernama said the explosions occurred early Sunday when fuel was being transferred from one ship to another.

Kuik Harris Anik, local police chief, said the body of Hassan Dayung, a 60-year-old Filipino, was recovered from the ship "MV Lady of Fatima," registered in the Philippines.

"Investigations show that Hassan died of carbon monoxide poisoning," he said.

Kuik said the search for the other two missing crewmen—Uban Tarji from the Filipino vessel and Bacho Tang, captain of the Indonesian ship—was continuing.

Bernama said four other crewmen, all foreign nationals, were also injured. It was not immediately known if any of them were Filipinos.

The "MV Lady of Fatima" was carrying 160 barrels of petrol, 10 barrels of diesel and 10 barrels of kerosene, it said. The Indonesian ship was a diesel and petrol supplier. *AFP*

National meet to combat crime convenes today

TO COMBAT crime, Interior Secretary Joey Lina announced that he will convene today the National Peace and Order Council (NPOC) to discuss guidelines for the adoption of a new peace and order plan.

"With the organization of the peace and order councils at the regional, provincial, city and municipal levels, there will be a more effective effort in the fight against all forms of criminality," Lina said in a statement issued yesterday.

He emphasized "the need to revitalize" the Special Action Committee composed of the secretaries of interior, national defense, social works, justice and the Armed Forces chief of staff, to take "decisive action in emergency situations."

Lina said NPOC meeting would focus on the organization of sub-national committees that will implement new peace and order plans to combat criminality, especially at the barangay level.

Lina, who chairs the council, made the announcement following the assumption to office of newly elected local officials on Saturday.

He also explained the need to revitalize the Barangay Peace and Order Committee, whose primary function is to monitor and coordinate the implementation of the peace and order program and related projects at the barangay level.

Lina enjoined governors, mayors and other local officials to immediately convene their respective provincial, city and municipal peace and order councils and adopt measures to improve the peace and order condition of their localities.

"With the assumption of a new set of local officials, I am confident that they will give priority concern to the maintenance of peace and order in their respective areas of jurisdiction," he said.

Lacson airs lament

"*MANHID na tayo sa dami ng kaso* (I've grown numb over the many cases filed against me)."

This was how neophyte Sen. Panfilo Lacson described the surfacing of one more witness linking him to the killing of 11 suspected members of the Kuratong Baleleng gang in Quezon City six years ago.

"Nothing is new, every now and then there is a witness coming out, people coming out to accuse (me). So, I've grown numb" over these developments, Lacson said in his first media briefing with the Senate press.

Although there is a 60-day temporary restraining order for the hearing of the Kuratong Baleleng case, he and his lawyers are taking moves to ensure that the case is thrown out for good.

"We're filing an injunction because it is our view that the case has been prescribed after two years," he said.

Lacson said he was at a loss why his critics were attacking him even after the elections.

"I don't understand it. What surprises me is that the elections are finished. We have been proclaimed as senators, but they still continue to hit me. Why?" he asked.

He said he also could not understand why his critics at the Philippine National Police, which he used to head, were discrediting him.

"I don't know why the PNP leadership has been treating me this way. I have become close to many of them. I did not do anything bad," he said.

He said he was only hard on the "scalawags and rogues" in uniform when he headed the PNP.

"It's really unfair. It's really hurting and very frustrating," he said. *Armand Nocum*

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OPINION

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Vol. 16 No. 205
ISSN
0116-2642

The PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo) corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati • P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office, 1263 Makati City, Philippines • Our new telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments; Editorial Fax 897-4793, 897-4794; Advertising 897-4807; Circulation 527-33-42, 527-33-48, 528-01-83, 528-01-86 and 528-02-13, Fax: 528-02-34.

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Case for live coverage

EDITORIAL

THE GOVERNMENT has asked the Supreme Court to reconsider its decision prohibiting live media coverage of the trial of deposed President Joseph Estrada. There is still hope that the decision may yet be reversed, considering the close vote of 8-6.

The trial of Estrada for plunder, perjury and other crimes is a landmark event in the country's history. It may well determine the direction of efforts to curb graft and corruption in government, a problem that has plagued the nation for decades.

Let us consider the objections of the majority in the Supreme Court to live media coverage of the Estrada trial:

First, the Court said that the rights of the accused must be protected, over and above freedom of the press and the right to public information. But will live media coverage of the trial work to the prejudice of the accused? Estrada has a battery of skilled lawyers who can always raise objections when they see that he is being denied his rights. Live coverage of the trial will precisely show if there are attempts to violate the rights of the accused.

Second, the Court said that "television can work profound changes in the behavior of people it focuses on." Who are the people it is referring to? Well, obviously, the Sandiganbayan justices, the public and private prosecutors, the defense counsel and the witnesses.

Live TV coverage will spur the justices, the prosecutors and the defense counsel to do their best and to be on their best behavior. The televised Senate impeachment trial showed that people won't tolerate a poor presentation (which was the initial impression they had of the prosecution's case) or legal hanky-panky and legerdemain (which the defense tried to pull off, to no avail, in the latter part of the trial).

The fear of grandstanding is not real because, to our knowledge, none of the justices, prosecutors and defense counsel are angling for public office. They just want to try the case as fairly as they can and then get on with their lives.

The Senate impeachment trial was another thing. Admittedly, some of the senator-judges were playing to the gallery because they were running for reelection. But even then, an even-handed presiding justice, Chief Justice Hilario Davide, kept the proceedings on an even keel.

In the coming trial, even if it's televised, the presiding justices can always see when a lawyer is going out of bounds, and admonish him or even declare him in contempt of court. The court has enough power to keep proceedings orderly and to slap down anyone who would convert the trial into a circus.

Third, the majority in the Supreme Court expressed fear that a televised trial may inspire another demonstration like Edsa II or "Edsa III."

But the circumstances of the Senate impeachment trial were extraordinary, and they called for an extraordinary remedy. The people went out in the tens of thousands to Edsa and Mendiola to protest what they perceived to be a travesty of justice committed by the Craven Eleven in the Senate. A televised court trial will ensure that a similar attempt to prevent the disclosure of the truth will never succeed.

As for TV coverage influencing the decision of the Sandiganbayan, we must give the justices who will try the former president more credit than that. They are experienced jurists who know the law and the rules of procedure. And if they show any bias or prejudice, the defense lawyers can always petition that they inhibit themselves or they can move to declare a mistrial in an extreme case.

The majority said that US courts don't allow live media coverage of trials. But Justice Reynato Puno disputed this, saying that 47 American states allow TV coverage while only three—New York, South Dakota and Mississippi—don't.

The trend now is toward transparency, openness in court proceedings, and yet the majority would limit public access—through the media—to court proceedings.

It is true that even with the ban, reporters can write about the trial but the reports they will write will go through several "filters" and may be affected by their prejudices and biases as well as those of the copyreaders and editors. Some people may just want their information straight from the courtroom, without having to go through media filters.

Information is the oxygen of democracy. Without that oxygen, democracy and good government will not flourish. Limit the people's access to information and very soon they will be suffering from informational and political emphysema.

People in a democracy should be given the widest, fullest access to information. Give the people the option of pure oxygen—full access to the Estrada trial through a live coverage by the media.

How to avoid losing your cell phone

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

RECTO AVENUE, formerly Azcarraga, in Manila used to be a friendly flea market for second-hand textbooks, particularly the stretch from Legarda to Avenida Rizal. I used to buy second-hand pocketbooks there when I was a student. Now it is a hotbed of crime. You can buy any fake document there, be it a fake Torrens title, a diploma, a driver's license, a passport, a marriage certificate, a bank statement, anything. You name it, they can fake it. Now you can buy stolen gadgets there, especially cell phones. (For stolen car parts, especially side mirrors, go to Banawe in Quezon City.)

Recto as a center for the manufacture of fake documents and the sale of stolen goods is known to everybody, including the police and the Manila city government. The wonder is why these two government agencies don't do anything about it. Tolerating the commission of crimes has made the manufacture of fake documents an industry so that our documents are no longer trusted. Foreign governments don't accept Philippine documents anymore as proof of anything. Anybody who wants a cell phone but can't afford the price of a new unit is told to go to Recto, where stolen units are sold very cheap.

The popularity of cell phones as a status symbol has made it a most coveted accessory. No teenager would be caught without one. Even drivers and housemaids have units. Texting is a favorite pastime. But because of the high cost of units, those who can't afford new units buy cheap second-hand ones. Ninety percent of second-hand units sold at Recto are stolen.

Many buyers know that what they're buying is stolen but they buy them anyway, not realizing that the Anti-Fencing Law, which penalizes people who sell, dispose of, buy or acquire stolen property, can send them to jail for a minimum of six years. As a result, there is a quick turnover of stolen cell phones.

To supply the demand, criminals and gangs have multiplied. Theft of cell phones has risen and cell phone snatchers have become bolder. Anybody who carelessly uses or carries his unit in public places stands a good chance of losing it. Worse, snatchers now resort to violence if their victims resist or fight back. Some such incidents have resulted in death and injuries to victims.

A police raid on the faking and fencing establishments on Recto will dampen the crime there, if not totally eliminate it. But sad to say, neither the Philippine National Police nor City Hall is doing anything to stop crime in their midst.

Instead of stopping crime and arresting and prosecuting the criminals, the PNP has issued a flyer advising the public on how to avoid falling victim to cell phone snatchers. Most of it is common sense. It can be summed up in four words: "Be vigilant" and "Stay alert" at all times.

Here are the PNP's Do's and Don't's.

Do's:

1. Buy cell phones only from authorized dealers. (Meaning, don't buy units from sidewalk stalls on Recto and other places.)

2. Record your cell phone serial numbers immediately after purchase. Serial numbers are available in the retail packs of brand new units. If you didn't buy your unit brand new, you can retrieve the serial numbers by pressing certain keys. (Ask the seller how.) Cell phone companies can block calls to and from stolen units if the serial numbers are reported to them.

3. Always place your cell phone in your pocket or bag where it is not visible.

4. Set your unit in "silent" mode when you are in public places and inside public vehicles.

5. If there is an urgent need for you to use your cell phone while outside, go to a place where you are safer—inside stores, near security guards, near police stations, inside offices or even in comfort room cubicles.

6. Always walk in well-lighted places. When walking alone, be on guard for persons following you, and walk toward areas where there are people in case you may need help.

7. Keep your bag with your cell phone inside close to your body.

8. When in public vehicles, be alert for snatchers. Be suspicious of passengers who board in threes or fours and who position themselves beside or behind the driver, near the *estribo*, and one among the passengers.

9. If you fall victim to snatchers, report immediately to the police and to your cell phone company.

10. Always cooperate with the police and barangay authorities.

11. If you want to own a second-hand cell phone, ask for the complete kit and a receipt.

Don't's:

1. When in public places, refrain from displaying your unit unnecessarily. Avoid using it in public. Do not clip it on your waist or carry it while walking or while inside public vehicles. This will only give snatchers the opportunity to grab it from you.

2. Never lend your cell phone to strangers who may approach you to make emergency calls.

3. Do not resist holdup men or snatchers. Do not panic. Follow their instructions but remain calm enough to remember their descriptions and the directions they took in escaping.

4. When inside stores, offices or restaurants, do not leave your unit lying on tables, on top of cabinets or even on chairs beside you. You never know when thieves posing as visitors may come and take your cell phone.

5. When paying for purchases in stores or supermarkets, do not leave your unit on the counter. Put it in your bag or pocket.

Remember, buying or selling stolen property is punishable under the Anti-Fencing Law or Presidential Decree 1612.

It begins with the small things

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

WHERE I live, which is a housing project, the strangest thing has happened. The parking lot right below us has become a tangled mess every night. I don't know how it began. I do recall when it began, which was around five years ago.

Like all parking lots, this one has spaces for cars delineated by yellow lines. Last year, some enterprising people solicited money from the residents to buy paint to mark those spaces, and those marks are still there. I told the people who took my contribution that the problem wasn't people parking loosely in the right places. The problem was people parking resolutely in the wrong places.

The wrong places were the lanes for the cars to pass through. I do not know the idiot who started it, but he parked on one of them, right in front of a couple of cars, and left his car there the whole night. He made it a point though to keep his car on neutral so it could be pushed when the cars he was blocking had to leave. Before long, other people followed suit. Now all the spaces where cars may pass through are clogged.

What's obviously wrong with the idea is that even if the car blocking your path is on neutral, you have to push it to be able to pass. That is not so easy when you are dressed for an occasion, when it is hot as hell, or when it is raining, which are most of the time. When you are rushing to meet an appointment, moreover, you find yourself cursing very early in the morning. It's an imposition that has no place in any civilized society or right-thinking neighborhood.

It's worse now with all the spaces in-between occupied by cars. No amount of pushing the ones blocking your path will clear it. It's become utter insanity. I hope it never happens, but if an accident befalls somebody there at night, he'll be dead before anyone can get out of that mess to take him to the hospital.

No amount of complaining, and quarrels, seems to make a dent on the minds, such as they can be called that, of those who routinely occupy what should be open spaces. Indeed, the practice has become so acceptable the alternative has become completely unacceptable. Or the practice has become so prevalent that the other more normal and rational practice has become thoroughly unreasonable.

That is how it begins, with the small things. With one person thinking he is the exception to the rule, leading other people to believe they too are exceptions to the rule, and turning the accumulated exceptions into the rule. The astounding thing with us though is the ease or swiftness with which we carry out the transformation. We may have established a Guinness-type record in that respect.

It is the same case with traffic. All it takes for traffic to turn into a gridlock is for some driver to imagine a two-way road does not apply to him, and to usurp the other lane. That is what happens every day on the road in front of our office. Surprisingly—or not surprisingly—the practice no longer elicits a universal cry of derision and a flurry of raised middle fingers from opened car windows. It merely encourages people to follow the lead of the driver who takes the first step, or turn. The movement is as automatic as cars honking as soon as the traffic light flashes green. The vehicle behind the person who first seizes the wrong lane immediately tails him as though pulled by a powerful magnet. And the vehicle behind that vehicle in turn, ad stupidum.

To solve the problem, the barangay officials have roped off the middle of the road a few meters or so before the intersection to demarcate right and left lanes. All that has done is to transfer the mess to the point where the rope starts. The practice has become so prevalent people now actually honk angrily behind you when you do not follow the lead of the idiot in front of you and take the wrong lane too. The norm has become the exception, the reasonable has become unreasonable, the acceptable has become unacceptable.

You wonder how much of the practice of giving money to government clerks and officials to "expedite" things began this way. How one fairly reasonable individual thought he was "unlike the others" in that he needed to get a perishable item from customs at once, needed to get ahead of the line at the licensing department because he has a ton of work to do, needed to pay off a cop to let an errant child off the hook. That must have happened soon after the war. I did read somewhere that before World War II, the Philippine civil service was reasonably honest and the Philippine Constabulary was fairly efficient. Look where they are now.

Weeds have a way of becoming a thicket, wrong practices have a way of becoming a culture. I am writing this in America, and as people have been reminding me over the past several days, Filipinos here are honest, hardworking and disciplined. So obviously the dishonesty, inefficiency and lawlessness have nothing to do with genes, or mental disposition, they have to do with manmade, or Filipino-made, situations at home. Here, where laws are applied fairly universally, or at least where Filipinos are in no position to be the exception, Filipinos get to show exemplary behavior and as a result get on very well in life.

Of course, I also remember something an Arab friend told me, which is that traffic cops in Jeddah now tend to accept bribes from erring drivers, a practice that seems to have been started there by Filipinos. But that is another story.

The trick, I suppose, lies in nipping the wrong things at the bud. Or in starting the right things at the lowest level. You may not like Lee Kuan Yew, but you've got to admire at least the way he has instilled, or enforced, discipline among Singaporeans. The first time I was in Singapore, in the 1970s, I was impressed with the way an airport official ran after me to say I had left something in the counter. I was even more impressed when I tried to hire a taxi that was disgorging its passenger and was told to take the one at the head of a line opposite the airport exit. Those things too have a way of spawning culture, faster than frogs spawn tadpoles.

Once the wrong practice kicks in, it's all you can do to stop it. I've been at my wits' end over the past several months trying to figure out a way to discourage people parking in front of me at night in our parking lot. Deflating tires and making a dent on the sides of offending vehicles—which I have done in broad daylight in plain view of people—do not seem to do the trick. They probably think I'm just being fashionably crazy. I'll have to dream up more imaginative mayhem.

And that's just over parking. Can you imagine how it is with official corruption?

Rethink ROTC abolition

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE TWO-YEAR Reserve Officers Training Course (ROTC) is under fire from certain quarters who allege that it has become irrelevant and open to corruption. For as long as I can remember the ROTC has been around, but in the old days few questioned its "relevance." It was thought of then as good for the young people's discipline and character formation. I submit that this argument remains relevant in these times: the people of this generation, admittedly softer in many ways than their parents, could certainly use continuing lessons in discipline and character formation.

Regarding corruption, abolishing the program would not provide the answer. Tackling corruption head-on would. As for the time devoted to ROTC training, which is usually every Sunday, being put to better use, that is entirely debatable. Would it mean more time for "malling"?

* * *

Army Chief Lt. Gen. Jaime de los Santos recently objected to the ROTC's abolition on the ground that the program enables the AFP to fill up the dwindling ranks of officers. He pointed out that the Philippine Military Academy does not turn out enough graduates to fill the officer corps. This year, for instance, the Army needs about 1,500 officers, but it will be short of 903 officers. The ROTC has over the generations proudly supplied many leaders for the AFP and the police who have performed competitively with the Peemayers.

De los Santos also cited the ROTC cadre's indispensable role in such endeavors as disaster management, search and rescue operations and election security. Without this reserve pool of officer candidates, the AFP would be even more impoverished than it already is. Let us rethink this move to abolish the ROTC as it involves the way of life of a nation. What needs to be done is to improve the ROTC training and correct its infirmities.

* * *

During the TV "debate" featuring the aspirants for the House speakership, sponsored by the Council on Public Affairs, Msgr. Nico Bautista asked why some unsavory characters get elected to Congress. For instance, a convicted rapist was just reelected to his third House term while another one has a pending extradition case. The candidates for speaker pointed out that these House members either have not received final conviction or have pending cases, and so Congress has no choice but to honor and respect the people's decision to elect them. The fault lies in the poor political education of the electorate and in the slow pace of the administration of justice here. For instance, that rapist-lawmaker was convicted during his first term, but from the looks of it, he would probably finish his third term before the Supreme Court rules with finality on his appeal.

But now Sen. Rene Cayetano has a bright idea. He is filing a bill that would bar from running for public office anyone convicted even by the lower court of a heinous crime or a crime against morality. Cayetano's bill will no longer wait for final conviction. This is good as this would prevent the anomalous situation, but it is also an indictment of the *pagong* pace of the justice system.

* * *

Every Sunday evening at 9:15, I join Cecile Alvarez on dzRH to look at citizens' efforts to help alleviate poverty. Last Sunday we featured Wilhelmina Martinez, administrator of Erda Technical-Vocational High School in Pandacan, Manila. Martinez spoke of Erda Tech's nearly 500 students from first year to fifth year, who are drawn from the poorest families in Metro Manila and trained in various skills under the dual-tech system while on full or partial scholarship. Erda Tech was set up by the Jesuit educator, Fr. Pierre Tritz in 1994, 20 years since he founded the mother organization, Erda Foundation, which currently provide about 18,000 students all over the country from grade one to sixth with their school needs to prevent them from dropping out.

* * *

In the early 1990s, Father Tritz, now 86, who realized that the only way to break the cycle of poverty is to give poor children technical training, also saw the need for a large pool of technically trained youths if this country was to industrialize.

As Martinez narrated it, this direct relationship between training and poverty is illustrated in the life of Nicasio "Junior" Sierva, who graduated from Erda Tech's electrical course last April. Junior, 20, comes from a family of 14 children, the son of *barangay tanod* Nicasio Sr., who earns P300 a month in his job, and Aling Felicidad, who runs a tiny *sari-sari* store selling junk food by Erda's gate. Their hovel in Morales Compound in Pandacan is the size of a family van so that the children cannot all sleep there at the same time. Some kids have to spend the night in mini-buses parked in front of Erda's gate.

The athletic Junior is the first in his family to earn a high-school diploma, thanks to Erda Tech. But what's remarkable about this family is that through their poverty they have remained happy, prayerful and focused on licking this problem. The investment in this boy was well worth it as he is very talented: he won first prize in the First Manila District Skills Competition in Commercial Wiring in September 2000 and was a participant in the 9th Metro Manila Skills Olympics at the World Trade Center last November. After graduation he began working as an electrical aide at a construction firm, Design Base, ignoring enticements for higher training because his family needs the income badly.

There are many such kids at Erda Tech who are talented but they badly need help in order to have a brighter future. If you want to help alleviate poverty, sponsor any one of 84 first-year students who have no sponsors yet. (It only costs P15,000 per student.) Call Wilhelmina Martinez or school principal Estelita Marzan at 521-3547, 564-2608 or 564-1857.

* * *

Chola Navarro of Performing Artists International (PAI), who never tires of looking for ways to give local singers the opportunity to hone their talents, wishes to invite those who are looking for a respite from all our problems to get lost in beautiful music. This Thursday, July 5, at 9 p.m. at the Alegria Lounge at the Holiday Inn, along UN Avenue in Manila, PAI will present a special adaptation of "South Pacific," the Rodgers & Hammerstein musical, which she says "integrates the musical with the current blockbuster 'Pearl Harbor.'" Sponsored by Pagcor, the show features as special guest Asian pop diva Dulce, who will sing the haunting "Bali Ha'i." The young Lia will be played by Academy One ballerina Pamela Mendoza, and her match-making mother, Bloody Mary, will be portrayed by Angie Magbanua. Playing the handsome Lt. Joe Cable is rising star Lance Raymundo, while veteran actor Chinggoy Alonso, the stage director, is cast as the suave Frenchman Emile De Becque. Navarro is artistic director and script-writer.

A time for triumph

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

SHE left their home with only P300 in her pocket, leaving behind even her children whom she could not possibly support. As "Pinky" makes clear in her story, though, the uncertainty, insecurity and loneliness of her situation was still preferable to living with an abusive husband and further damaging her children.

"I stayed with him because I thought that a wife should be submissive to her husband, that the woman is the binding factor in the strength of the family, and once the wife and mother is gone, the family will fall apart," she recalls. But it was with some shock that she realized that by staying despite the violence and abuse, "I was hurting my children more, that they were turning out to be nervous and insecure persons."

After several months of living on her own, and unable to find work, Pinky returned once more to the marital home, only to leave again after another violent incident. She would have continued on this roller-coaster relationship had she not happened to catch Anna Leah Sarabia, one of the founders of Kalakasan, on Dina Bonnevie's TV show. Taking down the phone number of the Kalakasan "Tigil Bugbog" hotline, she called up a counselor and started on the road to self-discovery and eventually, self-sufficiency. Today Pinky is herself a hotline counselor, talking numerous women like herself through the painful process of walking out and ending a relationship marred by violence.

* * *

AT THE 10th anniversary celebration of Kalakasan, the mood was buoyant and triumphant. Ten years after representatives of seven organizations working in the field of violence against women first gathered around a conference table and agreed to pool resources and energies, Kalakasan has evolved into an independent NGO providing a wide range of services for women survivors of violence.

Among the services that Kalakasan provides are telephone counseling, referrals for those seeking legal advice, and even person-to-person counseling when the need arises. At the same time, Kalakasan has taken the lead in advocacy programs on the issue, launching campaigns over the radio and TV, in print and even advertising. Regular campus tours also serve to bring the issue to the awareness of young men and women. It was also Kalakasan, with the support of then QC Vice Mayor Charito Planas that spearheaded the establishment of women's desks in police precincts in the city, and eventually, with the support of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, all over the country.

At the anniversary celebration, Kalakasan unveiled another form of collaboration, this time with artists in the "Artists and Activists" program. The initial output of the program is a unique and quite moving piece, "Payatas," that combines dance and video to make statements about poverty, violence, hypocrisy and despair.

A collaboration among dance artist Myra Beltran, dancer-videographer Nonoy Froilan and director Carlitos Siguion Reyna, "Payatas" is truly gut-wrenching, or as Sr. Mary John Mananzan remarked while we watched it unfold, *"nakaka-sakit ng sikmura."*

I do hope "Payatas" finds a wider audience, if only because a major character, a young boy through whose eyes much of the events are viewed, is played by Carlitos' and his wife Bibeth Orteza's own son. With his expressive eyes and physicality, he gives signs of someday growing into an artist-performer in his own right.

* * *

DURING the tribute that we, her sisters in Pilipina and other women's groups, organized for Caroline "Lyn-Lyn" Matammu Lampauog, her mentor and first boss, Ging Quintos Deles, recounted a story told her by Lyn-Lyn's husband Rald.

During the Christmas break, when Lyn-Lyn came home from her Jakarta posting for Unesco, she, Rald and their two children took part in a ritual that had become part of their small family's tradition. Each member of the family expressed a "dream" that he or she wished to be fulfilled in the year to come. Lyn-Lyn's dream was that they would all have the chance to spend time together as a family, since she had been apart from them for some months.

For their summer break this year, Rald and the children flew to Jakarta and there spent a month with Lyn-Lyn, visiting various tourist spots in Indonesia. It was while they were enjoying themselves in a beach resort not far from Jakarta that Lay, the older child, observed to her mother: "Inay, wasn't this your dream, that we would all be together as a family, enjoying ourselves?".

To which Lyn-lyn replied: "Yes, that was my dream, and now it's come true. That's why it's important to dream, because every triumph begins with a dream."

Our short and hastily prepared program for Lyn-Lyn interspersed recollections from her colleagues and sisters with songs by Bayang Barrios, Aleli Marcelino (a gender and development trainor who sang her own composition), and Inang Laya. We were especially grateful for the presence of Karina Constantino David and Becky Demetillo Abraham, in a rare reunion since they consider themselves semi-retired from performing.

From everything that was said of Lyn-Lyn not just during the sisterhood's tribute but also the tributes organized by her friends in social development and her classmates at the Ateneo, it seems clear that Lyn-Lyn lived her life by the light of a central dream. And that was no less than the dream of a society truly free and truly equal.

I have written previously that we considered Lyn-Lyn a "child" of Pilipina. More than that, she was a child of her times and of the society that emerged from the darkness of martial law, living out the injunctions on justice and equality that propelled her to commit to the life she chose. And it is with the painful realization that this young woman was coming into her own, and in her marriage with Rald, shaping two wonderful human beings, that we most mourn her loss and feel her absence.

Cultural influences

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

THE AGE of Exploration resulted in one of the most massive transfer of culture the world has known when Europe came into direct contact with the Americas and then the Orient. This was truly globalization on a grand scale. Remember that cacao, tomatoes, corn and tobacco—much as we accept them as part of our lives today without a thought to their origins—were unknown in Europe before Columbus, and in the Philippines before the friars. (As a matter of fact, tobacco has had a tremendous impact on our national life spanning more than three centuries and it is still causing all kinds of controversies. From the time of its introduction, it met with wide acceptance so that Filipinas must have been the first females to smoke in public without being considered to be acting improperly.)

The Malays who settled in the country before the advent of the Spaniards brought with them their own culture, which in turn must already have been influenced by other Asian countries such as China, Japan, Cambodia, Borneo and their other trading partners. After all these countries already had previous commercial, cultural and religious contacts.

Spain almost immediately organized a transpacific communication system that was one of the most difficult, complicated and longest in the history of navigation. A relationship was also established and developed with Mexico and the rest of the New World, again through trade. The route was amplified with a variety of others in the Americas and through the Atlantic with Spain and the rest of Europe. Manila, being centrally located, was converted into a center where East and West converged.

China influenced European art not directly but through the Chinese community in Manila and the Galleon Trade that brought their products to Europe. It must be pointed out that aside from the spices that were highly priced by Europeans, there were also objects of art, sculpture, textile and furnishings that were highly valued because they conferred prestige upon the owners. The Chinese might not even have considered these types as works of art, differentiating between "export wares" and their imperial wares as well as certain designs specifically for the European market such as the blue and white willow pattern.

These enthusiastic consumers were not just continental Europeans but Spanish settlers who had made their money in mining or commerce, government functionaries and Church dignitaries who considered these products to be symbols of prestige and power.

The clientele of Oriental products weren't confined to the wealthy since they found acceptance with a bigger market. Silk bought in Manila, embroidered or otherwise, had different categories, some of them priced within reach of the masses. Europe had its silk but it could not compete with the brilliance (or price) of the Chinese products. (Doesn't this sound all too familiar?)

Aside from textile, there were also porcelain, furnishings like screens, paintings and embroideries on silk that were manufactured and geared to a foreign market. Whole sets of tableware were ordered for special occasions such as the ascension of Charles IV to the throne. Today porcelain pieces can still be found bearing scenes of European life in Asia.

Silk embroidered in gold or silver thread was also ordered for religious statues or for use in religious vestments. Ivory products were commissioned and made under the direction of Spanish friars. Hard wood furniture was ordered decorated with mother of pearl, ivory and silver, whether in the form of tables, chairs, boxes, benches, armoires or screens.

The variety of these objects of art is for the most part seen today in museums, private residences and antique galleries. In recent years, quite a number have been salvaged through underwater archaeology, and the National Museum has impressive galleries devoted to these treasures.

For instance, the galleon San Diego, which sank during the encounter with the Dutch on Dec. 14, 1600, had 5,262 objects that have since been restored in Manila and Paris. From instruments of navigation like the astrolabe to bronze cannons forged perhaps by Panday Pira, 200 pieces of export blue and white porcelain, silver objects, items used in everyday life—these are mute testimony to that transpacific trade.

We owe Spain whatever vestiges may be left of an urban tradition. (The word "urban" means relating to or characteristic of or constituting a city, while to describe a person as "urbane" is to say he is courteous, polite and polished. Needless to say, I'm thinking of the Mehan Gardens and those restaurants atop the Intramuros walls.) The urban tradition, i.e., the concept of how a population is to be organized into a community, was implanted by Spain (probably more specifically by Spanish friars). As a Mediterranean country, Spain had a long history of urban life as well as the experience of establishing cities in the New World. Intramuros shares with Latin American countries the grid pattern with streets parallel and perpendicular, a square major plaza, a *plaza de armas*, the fort, the bastions, the posterns, the storage for ammunition, the royal house, the hermitages, the *cabildo*, the cathedral, the monasteries.

Whatever the Americans might have thought by the time they arrived, we had been urbanized for 300 years, a tradition that appears to be on the wane today.

Coming of age

(Concluded from Saturday)

15. RECOGNIZE the substance of your rage. Rage without respect for other voices gets you nowhere.

Balance your passion and criticism. Stick to the objective and don't be afraid to take leave when the greater good is absent from a cause.

16. Respect women. Respect nature. Respect old folks. Respect others' opinions. Respect yourself. Without looking at other side of truth, you're really just talking to yourself, making others talk behind your back. It's a democracy out there. Respect other things and other peoples' places in the sun. They are pieces of you.

YOUNGBLOOD

Dennis Torrecampo

*We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.***

17. Seize the day! Not tomorrow, but now. If it's within your control, leave nothing to chance. Take the rein; grab opportunities. There is so much more to say but the important thing is for you to go on the journey and discover things for yourself.

Every fall is worth the ride, but do count the great strides, and have fun! Remember: Suck the very marrow out of life.

18. Embrace your weaknesses. Heal your bruises. Recover, recover, recover. Everybody hurts. Everyone faces storms in his life. But what counts most is that you get back up and face new challenges.

19. Dream. Otherwise life is not worth living. Imagination is more important, more lasting than knowledge. Albert Einstein knew that. The best form of freedom is when you can get out of the boundaries of your mind. Break the barriers of your soul's poverty. Soar above the crowd and take yourself beyond its visions.

20. Believe. In God. Angels. Life. Love. Friendship. Family. Success. Beauty. They're what makes this life worth living, and they make the less palatable aspects of our lives more digestible.

21. Life is beautiful, no matter what you did or what others have done to you. Amid the darkest news, the bleakest events, there's the awesome miracle of living. And while you live, try your best to act with courage, contentment and wisdom. You've heard it before: You need the first to change the things you can, the second to accept the things you can't, and the third to know the difference.

22. Be a little bit of everything. But keep your character. A warrior who wears only one armor leaves some parts vulnerable. Never be afraid to be different. Find your individuality and keep it evolving. Diversity makes this world interesting.

23. Never stop learning or miss an opportunity to learn. Plant a tree. Write a book. Contribute a verse. Learn to play an instrument. Sing. Dance. Cook. You only have this one chance. Don't waste it.

24. Seek your motivation. First you crawl until you're strong enough to stand on your own feet. Use your hands, feet and other sources of strength and be amazed by your own capacity to make it through. Your failures or shortcomings are your first source of wisdom.

25. Perfection and happiness are for real. The happiest people don't have everything; they're just good at making the best of everything that life brings. Don't search too far for the perfect time, the perfect person or the perfect wood. The laughter and the tears you've shared, the wisdom you've acquired, the constancy of life and the fact that you are part of it make every moment perfect.

26. Earn respect and freedom. Guard them with your life. History teaches us that freedom is never given and respect isn't handed out for free. One must fight for them and when he has them he must exercise eternal vigilance to keep them. And then he has to ask himself what he is going to do with them.

27. True genius lies in achieving more with less. At work, do things the smart way: maximize the use of available resources, delegate tasks, set realistic deadlines. Why should you live your life differently? Making things a lot simpler often involves nothing more than the use of common sense.

28. People go on forever when somebody takes them along. We achieve tangible mortality by enjoying every moment with our loved ones. In their hearts, we live on as undying memories told from one generation to the next.

29. Above all, be true to yourself. Express, do not impress. The best words and the most wonderful stories are those that we can take with us without fear, guilt or watching ourselves lest we accidentally slip into inconsistency. Which is really a lie.

30. Anger has no purpose. You probably don't have to turn the other cheek when your are treated unfairly, but to show anger is only to display one's weakness unnecessarily. That only excites the offender for then he has achieved his or her purpose. Get even by not getting mad.

31. Greed eventually destroys what it accumulates. Absolute power corrupts absolutely. A cheap squirt of authority may embolden a person but it also gradually degrades one's humanity if left to rule on its own. Power is essential to rule or to lead, but unguided by a good motivation or an honest heart, it becomes a ticking bomb that will destroy its bearer eventually.

32. Ignorance or apathy does not make one less culpable, but more accountable. In this world, it's so easy to commit a crime: just do nothing, say nothing, be nothing. Cowardice in the midst of chaos reduces our capability to realize our full potential. It damages us permanently until we do something about it. On a larger scale, it turns ineptness and injustice into truths that people live by.

33. Never cry wolf. It takes only one discovered lie to soil one's reputation. If you truly have to lie, make it simple, easy to remember and consistent. But if you alarm people dishonestly or mischievously, prepare to pay the price. When the true moment comes, nobody will believe you anymore.

34. Seek truth from within. Not from newspaper, television or radio reports that tend to magnify crises. Just as they sometimes make things look larger than life, so do they conjure visions worse than death. But don't be too blind to notice the scars, the real enemies, the cry for help. Truth lies in your heart. Listen to what it tells you.

35. Act serious and people will take you seriously. Act dumb and you'll be treated the same way. People listen to leaders who carry a big stick.

36. Prejudice is ignorance is slavery. Woman and homosexuals have been prejudged for their gender, African-Americans and other "colored" people for their skin. We've built "caste" systems to alienate, and other proselytizing systems to segregate "our" kind from the "others."

37. Stop counting and start living. You can't account for the appetite, the good night sleep, the wild ride, the times spent together, the living years, the sensibility and common sense we gain from real experiences. These are priceless. Save, yes, but not to the point of postponing what you can enjoy now.

38. Real poverty is in the soul. Amputate the soul and you kill the man. A nation can suffer the most severe economic and political crises, but the most tragic one is when its people lose all hope while its leaders want only to enrich themselves at the peoples' expense.

39. Just because you don't see something, it doesn't mean it's not there. Even if it's there, we may fail to see. A rock in a fountain of water, so goes a line in "The Godfather," remains hard and solid inside, as impenetrable as some residents of the Vatican who fail to see God even if they're surrounded by His images.

We're not any different. But it's part of our life's journey to either seek our God or to stay callous and cold as stone.

40. Don't be afraid to take big steps, you cannot cross a chasm in two small jumps. Remember there is nothing to fear but fear itself. The worst form of death is the one you live with inside of you amid the flow of hope that accompanies each passing day. Live with honor and without regret.

Dennis Torrecampo 28, works as a content manager for a leading global e-business consultancy firm in Singapore.

Notice to Youngblood contributors

Contributors to Youngblood who haven't received their checks are requested to inquire with the PDI cashier on Friday.

Erap trial a matter of public concern

THE SUPREME Court decision not to allow television coverage of the trial of former President Joseph Estrada comes as a big disappointment.

The Court ruled that "a public trial is not synonymous with a publicized trial"—which tends to confuse "public" with "publicity" if only to vaguely rationalize barring the use of the existing technology of television.

Owing to the fact that the trial has no precedent in the history of litigation in the country, the Court ought to have been more circumspect in deciding the matter and should not have resorted to semantics as an easy way out.

The trial of a president is a matter of public concern. To cover it live on television is to make available information that is a matter of public concern to all those who are interested using existing technology.

Television is as public as one can get in this time and age. If a public trial is held, then it follows that television can cover it live.

Now what is a "publicized trial"? Is it a reference to a television network's effort to maximize its viewership rating? If this is so, then the Court should merely direct the networks not to "publicize" or run station ads to announce the coverage of the trial.

It was not necessary for the Court to make a distinction between a public trial and a publicized trial because one certainly has nothing to do with the other except perhaps in addressing the same audience: the Filipino public.

Is it necessary then to point out to the justices of the Supreme Court that Filipino citizens are the aggrieved party in this case against the former president and that therefore they should be as much a part of the proceedings? The people need to know whether the former president is guilty or not guilty of the charges against him. And this need to know the truth can be the only argument for television coverage.

Is the Supreme Court decision not adding insult to the injury (of the alleged crime against the people) that the former president has already inflicted upon the Constitution of the land? And being the aggrieved party here, is the ruling not another cause for grievance at being deprived of the experience of standing witness to this moment in Philippine judicial history?

It is only proper for the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster sa Pilipinas (KBP) to file an appeal for reconsideration, in the hope that the decision will be overturned.

LETTERS

Indeed, we should all express disapproval of this ruling that tends to limit access to information that is of great interest to the public.

Interestingly, in its desire to discourage mass action, the Court is courting public unrest—directed at the institution—with this kind of decision. And the justices can rest assured that any street action of that kind will be covered by television.—**FRANCISCO LEO LOPEZ, 2118 M.H. del Pilar St., Malate, Manila**

Red baiting on ROTC issue

IT is so amusing how the Armed Forces of the Philippines makes such sweeping but dense statements in the letter published last June 29 titled "Review of ROTC program in progress." Lt. Col. Jose Z. Mabanta carefully evaded the real issues which have lead to the clamor for the abolition of the ROTC. He simply slandered legitimate and recognized student organizations by resorting to labeling, branding and Red baiting, a technique the AFP is very famous for.

The letter was in fact an attack not on what Mabanta dubbed as "leftist organizations" but on the youth who are pursuing their legitimate demands. The picket at the University of Sto. Tomas, spearheaded by Anakbayan, the League of Filipino Students and Student Christian Movement of the Philippines, was legitimate expression of the demand of not only members of these organizations but of students and cadets as well. It is not only these student organizations that want the ROTC program abolished. Many parents and school administrations are troubled by the corruption within the program.

Does the AFP find it hard to understand that the ROTC program breeds corruption? In exposing this, Mark Chua lost his life.

Second, the program is nothing more than an added compulsory burden to our parents adding to the cost of education which is rising yearly. Third, the program molds fascist minds among the youth.

Mabanta's appeal to parents and the academic community to keep away these student organizations from their children and students was a sappy one. The AFP speaks of a "democratic way of life" and "molding the youth into responsible, competent and learned professionals," but isn't it a monstrous human rights violator?

No amount of Red baiting can stop us in pursuing the youth's legitimate demands, and in this case, the abolition of the ROTC.—**TANYA MARIA GUERRERO, national president, League of Filipino Students, 1316 San Perfecto St., Sampaloc, Manila**

Whitewash of Marcos' abuses

THE RECENT revelation of former Senate President Jovito Salonga about who he thinks was the real mastermind of the Plaza Miranda bombing is nothing less than disturbing. According to Salonga's theory, the bombing of the Liberal Party meeting was masterminded by Jose Maria Sison and not Ferdinand Marcos. Sison allegedly plotted and executed the plan to intensify the hatred for the Marcoses, thereby providing the masses more reason to join the ranks of the revolutionaries.

Wittingly or unwittingly, Salonga, by playing the apologist for the Marcoses, rubbed salt on the wounds of the more than 10,000 human rights victims who still have to see justice served. This is the reason nobody was surprised that the Marcos family was the first to applaud the book of Salonga.

If we were to believe such "unraveling of the truth," then we become a party to the whitewashing of the gross human rights violations of the Marcos regime. And if such "corrections" of history continues, we shouldn't be surprised if the next revelation would be that it was not the Marcoses who plotted to kill Ninoy Aquino but Sison or some other person. To stretch the argument further, it was probably Sison who gave Estrada his drinking and gambling habit so that the people will hate his governance. What absurdity!

Another point I would like to add is the biases of the witnesses whose testimony Salonga cites. All the names he mentioned are either nonliving or are working for the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Victor Corpuz and Ruben Guevarra serve as intelligence agents of the government, and I wonder if they would be willing, given the military's code of silence, to tell the whole world the real role of the military in the bombing plot of Plaza Miranda. With the recent announcement of the AFP that the CCP-NPA-NDF is still the No. 1 threat, wouldn't it be safe to conclude that such "exposés" are aimed to undermine the peace talks and prepare public opinion for its eventual scrapping?

Such an absurdity should not be seen as an aberration to the general trend. Where else in the world can a convicted rapist be elected as a congressman, or a torturer treated as a hero? And only in the Philippines can the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos be the friend and not the fiend. *Dito lang po talaga sa atin.*—**RAYMOND MAGLANOC, chair, ANAKBAYAN-NCR, 1316 San Perfecto St. Sampaloc, Manila**

Poisoned by Manila's polluted air

WONDER what ever happened to the way some Filipinos in Manila think? Convert a mini jungle into a concrete jungle? These people are the same ones affected by pollution caused by people and machines. Don't they realize that the trees help clean the air they breath? Are sentimentality and respect for cultural heritage gone?

My heart cried the first time I saw mountains being quarried for building supplies and to reclaim the seashores. I rebelled against my own relatives when I saw that my Nanay's share of the family property was hacked for coco lumber and the coconut trees were never replaced. And people wondered why little rain cause so much flooding? There's hardly any trees to hold the soil down!

These people who favor turning the Mehan Gardens into another concrete jungle are not thinking. It must be all the carbon monoxide that they breathe!—**JOUSIELYN C. NOSCAL, 1013 St. Rt. 307 West, Jefferson, Ohio, 44047 USA**

Barking up the wrong tree

LEAH Salterio should have at least checked the veracity of Art Bell having allegedly insulted the Filipinos. I am a regular listener of Bell's radio program, Coast to Coast and, time and time again, he has denied the accusations. His letter to the Filipino people is posted on his website, www.artbell.com.

The alleged insult attributed to Art Bell was traced to a university in California. Apparently, there was rivalry between ethnic Asian groups in that school and somebody circulated that offensive letter in the Web.

While I agree that we should always protest and take offense when derogatory accusations are made against our race and culture, this is one case of "barking up the wrong tree."

Reading the INQUIRER in the Net has been a daily habit for me.—**EXPEDITO MERCADO, emercado@midway.uchicago.edu**

Please see the following story on Page A22.--Ed.

RP coffee industry needs a break

COFFEE is about the latest thing to hit our colonial minded society. Although the Philippine coffee industry has been dying a slow and painful death ever since the Americans brought in coffee beans from Brazil and Colombia, the *elitista* have spearheaded the entry of expensive coffee places like Starbucks.

Starbucks coffee is good and steeply priced. It sure does repress the Filipino's taste for good old Batangas *barako* and other local varieties. It's either instant coffee or the expensive coffee shop kind for us Filipinos.

The government in its move toward globalization upon the prodding of First World nations hastened the entry of foreign coffee shops like Starbucks, Coffee California and Seattle's Best in the late 1990s. What the government has forgotten to do is encourage the growth of the local coffee industry.

Philippine coffee consists of four varieties (Arabica is the best of all). It is sad to see our once thriving coffee industry dying beside the expensive imported varieties that dominate our market.

Sure the Philippines has been dubbed a "houseboy country" by critics on account of our penchant for anything foreign. It has come to the point that we forget to nurture our very own, including the simplest things like coffee.

I've been sitting in Starbucks coffee shops for three years now ever since the first outlet in Makati opened to the detriment of my allowance. Starbucks gives you the feeling that you're in the States. It also gives you a taste of sophisticated coffee drinks like macchiato, latte and the like. Its clientele isn't exactly your average Filipino waiting to catch a jeepney or bus ride. The fact is Starbucks caters to the AB market.

But hey, there's not too much harm in drinking Starbucks coffee. Let's just not forget to remind the government to ease up a bit on the globalization thing. Our coffee should emerge victorious in the Philippines if not the international market. Let's face the fact that our coffee industry needs a big break and patronizing coffee shops that sell foreign coffee is detrimental to our national interest.

In this sense coffee reflects the political and social abyss that we Filipinos must fathom. It reflects many things in our society, like the ineffectiveness of our government and our colonial mindset, that have brought our country down to its knees in the past and in the present.—**RINA T. LIM, Department of Political Science, University of the Philippines Diliman**

Even the dogs know

"BOUNDED on the N., points 3 to 4 by Lot 2, Block 5, on the E., points 1 to 2 by Lot 6, Block 5..." The description goes on and on, defining the boundaries of a piece of land that a *ninong* passed on to me many years ago. I've paid the taxes on it each year at the Caloocan City Hall but I've never seen the property itself for the simple reason that no one can find it, not even people from the City Hall. I suspect that if I ever find that piece of property, it would have been taken over by squatters, or that it has been sold to someone else in a fraudulent deal.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

The problem isn't just with land titles. An American friend bought a condominium several years back, or thought he bought one. It was a scam and the case is still in the courts.

I thought of all these problems as I read a book, "The Mystery of Capital," by Hernando De Soto, which included case studies conducted in Egypt, Mexico, Haiti and the Philippines. De Soto's thesis is simple: Western countries developed capitalism around property rights. When people are able to acquire their own land and homes, and a legal system is in place to recognize and safeguard that ownership, then property can be used as collateral to borrow money from banks and to invest this in businesses. All that becomes a major force for capital to grow.

In countries like the Philippines, only large landowners are assured of their property rights. Everyone else is left hanging. The poor can't afford to buy land or a home in the first place so they end up squatting. The middle class is only a bit more fortunate, paying exorbitant prices for substandard housing. But rich or poor, everyone is so very vulnerable to anomalies and frauds when it comes to land titles and home ownership documents.

De Soto writes extensively about the phenomenon of squatting, which is common to many Third World countries. But he points out that even in the United States, there were squatters up to the 19th century. What the government did was to find ways of helping the squatters legalize their land ownership.

That's different from our urban politicians' squatter coddling. Our politicians curry votes from the slums through a patronage system, offering "protection" for squatter communities but without ever resolving the question of ownership. But then politicians aren't interested in giving the squatters their own land and homes. What they want is to keep the squatters in limbo, without titles, so that they will be perpetually dependent.

De Soto's researchers found that in the Philippines, someone who has been squatting on public or private land could try to purchase the land. But the squatter would need to form an association with other illegal occupants and to apply from a state housing finance program for funding support. The process entails 168 bureaucratic steps and dealing with 53 public and private agencies, all of which could consume 13 to 25 years. If the land in question is considered "agricultural," it would have to be reclassified as "land for urban use." That involves another 45 bureaucratic procedures that will take two more years.

Without connections, the squatters' applications languish, and with so many steps and agencies involved, the chances for graft and corruption shoot up without any guarantees that the applicants will ever complete the process. The system just does not encourage legal home ownership.

It's encouraging to hear housing "czar" Michael Defensor announcing reforms in this area, including a reduction of bureaucratic hurdles for housing projects. In May, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo signed executive orders reclassifying more than 2,000 hectares of government land in Manila into housing sites, opening the way for squatters who have been there the last 40 or 50 years to legalize their land occupancy.

Instead of focusing on the First Couple's one-shot doleout activities, the media should feature initiatives with long-term effects, such as the reforms in housing. With some three million Filipino families not owning their homes, the Macapagal administration has an opportunity to make a lasting difference. Land and homes are passed on to the next generation, so politicians who help make this ownership a reality will be remembered for many years.

To go back to my main point, a sound housing project starts with cleaning up our legal infrastructure for land and homes. Unless we do this, we will see a lot more disputes and court litigation. De Soto offers this advice: Listen to the barking dogs. He notes that even in the most congested slums, you can tell from the dogs' barking where a household begins and ends. At least the dogs have it all figured out. Maybe my *ninong's* property is actually in Quezon City?

* * *

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.org

What happened to story on Irene's deposit?

SEVERAL months ago you ran a series of articles on a bank account supposed to have been opened by Irene Marcos with Deutsche Bank in Germany allegedly to be used for some payoffs on the sharing of Marcos' ill-gotten wealth. It seems that your newspaper has grown cold on that issue and has left it hanging with the allegations and counter allegations of the characters involved (including Deutsche Bank). Nothing has really been proven.

With your publication blowing hot and cold on the issue, I sometimes wonder what your motives are. Did you really intend to get to the bottom of this story? Or did you run it simply to boost your readership and circulation? You can only do justice to your readers if you pursue this issue to its just conclusion or at least close the issue by admitting that you've been had and you have wittingly or unwittingly allowed your paper to be used for the personal agenda of some characters.—**CRIS S. CABALATUNGAN, 8 Ormoc St., Alabang Hills, Muntinglupa**

Our reporter is now in Dusseldorf, Germany, following up the story.--Ed.

Roco not 'spoiling' public school teachers

THIS is a reaction to the Federation of Association of Private School Administrators' lament that Education Secretary Raul Roco is "spoiling public school teachers." (PDI, 6/19/01)

Fapsa president, Eleazar Kasilag expressed grief over Secretary Roco's actions "in appeasing the perennially complaining public schoolteachers to the point of hastening the death of private educational institutions."

I see nothing wrong if public schoolteachers, who for so long have been receiving wages that cannot dignify their existence or their profession, would be perennially complaining. I see nothing wrong in Secretary Roco doing justice to public schoolteachers, That was not appeasing, it was honoring, recognizing what public schoolteachers deserve.

What I see is wrong is Mr. Kasilag's inference that Secretary Roco's actions would significantly contribute to the death of private commercial education institutions. I think he should be pointing his fingers instead, at many private schools unabating tuition increases paralleled with the low and decreasing value of the workers (private and public) wages. With that, who does he think can now afford private commercial education?

Mr. Kasilag further said, "Give them what they need not what they want, because they will always have problems and they will always want more."

Again, I see nothing wrong if the government gives the public schoolteachers what they want, if they need it to enable them to deliver quality services. This is not "pampering" public schoolteachers, this is giving poor Filipinos the privilege of equal opportunity to quality education. Conditions change with time that brings into being more problems and wants, and in appreciating and addressing these, is not "spoiling" public schoolteachers—it is managing public resources.

Don't you think so that Fapsa needs to join hands with the public sector in its campaign for the repeal of PD 1177?—**PEDRO LUIS CINCO, deputy general secretary, Public Services Labor Independent Confederation, Mindanao Regional Council, 239-A Iñigo St., Bo. Obrero, Davao City**

The WORLD

Luverne B. Gueco, Editor

Milosevic: Trial a Nato revenge

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia—Slobo-dan Milosevic will tell the UN war crimes tribunal Tuesday that he is being put on show trial as a victim of Nato revenge because he refused to give up Kosovo, his lawyers said.

Milosevic was extradited Thursday to The Hague, Netherlands, to be tried by the tribunal on alleged involvement in Kosovo atrocities during the crackdown he ordered in 1998 on the Serbian province's ethnic Albanian majority. He was to appear Tuesday for an initial hearing.

Milosevic had been awaiting trial for alleged corruption and abuse of power in a Belgrade prison, and domestic investigations had recently widened to his alleged links to covering up Kosovo atrocities. Although he was extradited before any domestic trial, his lawyers claimed Sunday that they had proven their client's innocence and the same defense team would be representing him at The Hague.

The lawyers said Milosevic was in good health despite the ordeal of extradition.

Asked about strategy, lawyer Branimir Gugl said: "We have not been working on the defense . . . (because) Mr. Milosevic does not recognize the tribunal."

Gugl said his client continues to assert that his is "clearly a political trial, based on the fact that he is the only man who stood up against Nato."

Milosevic's refusal to pull out his forces from Kosovo despite a Nato ultimatum provoked 78 days of bombing by the alliance, stopped only in mid-June after he gave in and ordered his troops out of the province, permitting UN administrators and Nato-led peacekeepers in.

Reflecting the trademark defiance Milosevic has exhibited throughout his battle to avoid extradition, Gugl said the former president told his wife, Mirjana Markovic, in a phone call from The Hague that he had no regrets.

"He was working for the interests of the Serbian people as president, and if he were to be head of state again, he would act the same way," Gugl said. Milosevic is Serb and Serbia is the larger and far more powerful of the two remaining Yugoslav republics.

"He is in fantastic psychological condition," Gugl said of Milosevic, citing his wife. "He says he is not guilty of anything."

Gugl said Milosevic requested "books, fresh clothes and money," during the phone call.

Milosevic was handed over to the tribunal by the Serbian government, in defiance of a Constitutional Court ruling that suspended a federal government decree allowing his extradition.

Calling the handover a "turning point," the tribunal's chief prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte, said Friday that the Kosovo indictment against the former Yugoslav president would be expanded.

Del Ponte said the new indictment would accuse Milosevic of responsibility in the deaths of more than 600 Kosovo Albanians, twice the number of names cited when he was first charged in May 1999.

An estimated 10,000 Kosovo Albanians were killed during Milosevic's 18-month crackdown against the rebellious Serbian province. *AP*

Drama set in a small, bare court

By Robert H. Reid

THE HAGUE—The opening chapter in the trial of Slobodan Milosevic will be played out in a compact chamber, where computer terminals and surveillance cameras will help justices weigh evidence of medieval brutality.

On Tuesday, the former Yugoslav president will be led into the chamber to a blue swivel chair, located in front of an interpreter's booth which is located to the right-front of the table where the presiding judge, Richard May of Britain, sits.

The man who wielded nearly absolute authority in Yugoslavia for more than a decade must stand when the judge enters the chamber and again when he is asked to enter his plea to each of four charges:

- Deportation, a crime against humanity;
- Murder, a crime against humanity;
- Murder, a violation of the laws or customs of war;
- And persecutions on political, racial and religious grounds, a crime against humanity.

All four charges are based on atrocities committed by his forces during a crackdown on ethnic Albanians in Kosovo two years ago. The court must decide whether Milosevic bears responsibility for those atrocities. *AP*

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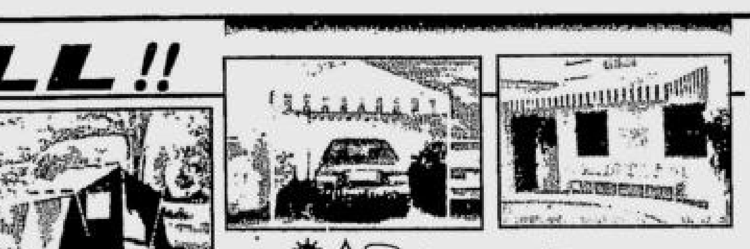
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Wahid urges early polls to end crisis

JAKARTA—President Abdurrahman Wahid yesterday urged early general elections as the only way out of Indonesia's political stalemate, accusing opponents of blocking all avenues to compromise.

"If we still want to see this country united, the constitutional deadlock has to be overcome," an angry Wahid said at his office.

"The solution can only be through an advanced general elections," he said. "The people should judge, we should return to the people."

General elections are not due until 2004, and Wahid, who has floated the idea before, would need the approval of the country's national assembly, the MPR, to call them.

"All people said there should be no (state of) emergency, but all are closing off the path toward compromise . . . What do they all want?," said Wahid, addressing participants of a course held by the National Resilience Institute for district and municipal officials.

Wahid was referring to his widely opposed plan to impose a state of emergency, which would enable him to freeze parliament before it can impeach him during a special MPR session on Aug. 1.

The plan has been opposed by the military, the police, MPs and many politicians.

Wahid reiterated that efforts to oust him through the special session would trigger the disintegration of the nation and he reserved particular wrath for House Speaker Akbar Tanjung.

MPs both at the MPR, the upper house of parliament, and at the DPR, the lower house, have however already objected to bringing forward the general elections for a second time.

Indonesia brought forward the 2003 general elections to 1999, which lead to the election by the MPR of Wahid as the president and Megawati Sukarnoputri as vice president.

Wahid's close aide, Defense Minister Muhammad Mahfud, said an early general election could be "a solution to the current debacle" between Wahid and legislators.

"That is because both the DPR and the president consider (their actions) as constitutional," Mahfud said, adding the MPR should play fair.

"If they want to revoke the power of the president, they should also accept to consider advancing the general elections." *AFP*

Taiwan offers official talks with China

TAIPEI—Taiwan, frustrated with a two-year impasse in relations with rival China, has offered to hold talks with Beijing through official channels, local media reported yesterday.

The proposal is unlikely to go down well in Beijing, however, since China has largely ignored the government of President Chen Shui-bian and his pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DPP).

Taiwan newspapers quoted Cabinet Secretary General Chiou I-jen as saying the government did not exclude letting the top China policymaking agency, the Mainland Affairs Council, hold talks with the Taiwan Affairs Office of China's State Council.

"If the other side is willing, we do not rule out the possibility of allowing the Mainland Affairs Council to deal directly with the mainland's Taiwan Affairs Office," the mass circulation China Times newspaper quoted Chiou as telling reporters on Sunday.

Taipei and Beijing, rivals since a 1949 civil war split, began bilateral negotiations through quasi-official bodies in the early 1990s, but talks were frozen in mid-1999 when then President Lee Teng-hui demanded parity.

Beijing views the island as a breakaway province and has threatened to attack if it declares independence or drags its feet on unification talks.

President Chen has mellowed his pro-independence stance and offered olive branches since he swept to power last year. But he refuses to kowtow to Beijing's cherished "one China" principle that it is the sole, legitimate government of all China. *Reuters*

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Argentina's 'Blond Angel' surrenders

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina—One of the most infamous death squad leaders of Argentina's 1976-1983 "Dirty War" dictatorship, Alfredo Astiz, turned himself in to police early yesterday after an Italian court sought his arrest.

The former Navy captain, known as "The Blond Angel" for his cherubic looks, was ordered detained by an Argentine judge at the request of an Italian court which linked Astiz to the 1976 kidnappings of Angela Maria Aieta and the 1977 kidnapping of Giovani Pegoraro and his pregnant daughter, Susana Pegoraro.

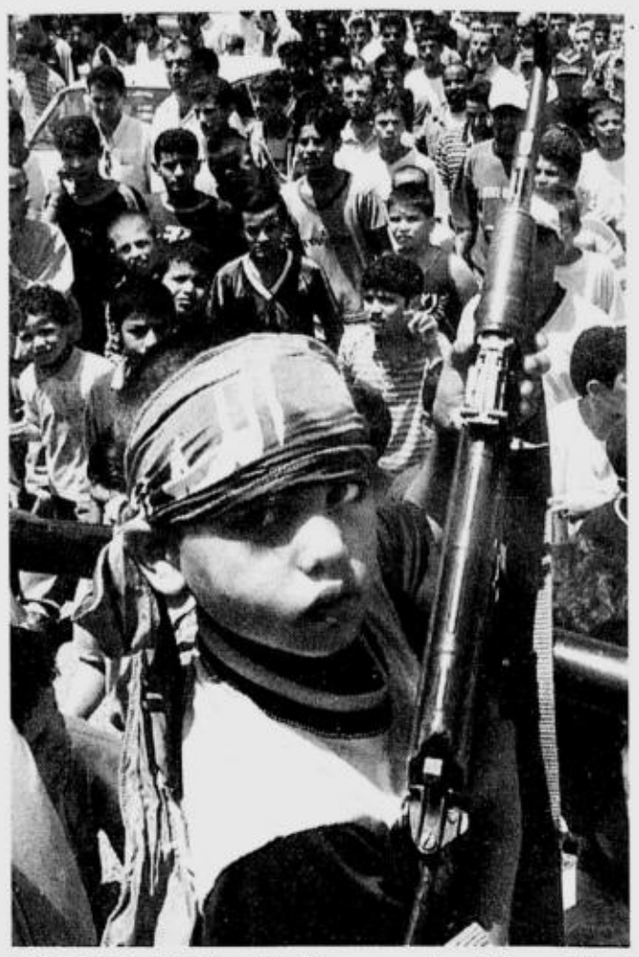
"He turned himself in to Interpol and now he's at (federal) police headquarters accompanied by a lawyer waiting the judge's instructions," a federal police spokesperson said.

Astiz was transferred to a Coast Guard detention cell at 2 a.m. awaiting a court hearing, the spokesperson added but could not say whether this might lead to his extradition.

There is evidence that Susana Pegoraro gave birth to a daughter, who is living under the name Evelyn Vazquez in the port city of Mar del Plata some 400 km south of Buenos Aires, Clarin and La Nacion newspapers said on Sunday.

During Argentina's dictatorship, pregnant women detained by the military were often killed after giving birth and their babies stolen to be raised by military families.

Also dubbed the "Angel of Death," Astiz once boasted to Argentine magazine Trespuntos in 1998, in what he claimed was an off-the-record talk, that he was "the best-trained man in Argentina to kill journalists and politicians." *Reuters*



THE SON of slain Palestinian Hamas member Mahmoud Khalil holds a gun during a Hamas demonstration in the West Bank city of Jenin July 1. Five Palestinian militants were killed by Israeli forces Sunday, three in a helicopter attack and two in a clash with soldiers, Israeli and Palestinian officials said. REUTERS

Israel jets attack Syrian radar station

SARIN TAHTA, Lebanon—Israeli warplanes attacked a Syrian military radar station in Lebanon on Sunday in the second such strike in three months. The attack wounded two Syrian troops and a Lebanese soldier, Lebanese security officials said.

Israel said the airstrike in the eastern Bekaa Valley retaliated for a Friday attack by Hezbollah guerrillas on its northern border.

Hezbollah quickly responded to Sunday's raid, firing rockets and mortars at Israeli military positions in disputed territory on the south Lebanon border. Israeli artillery fired back, wounding a Lebanese farmer, according to Lebanese officials.

The tit-for-tat attacks marked a sharp escalation in the border conflict, reminiscent of the worst days of Israel's 18-year occupation of south Lebanon that ended when Israel withdrew its forces in May 2000. It also raised the specter of a direct military confrontation between Syria and Israel, the Middle East's most implacable enemies.

Two Israeli fighter jets fired two missiles at the Syrian radar position in this village on the main road between the towns of Zahle and Baalbek at 11:55 a.m.

"It's been destroyed," said a Syrian soldier, armed with an AK-47 assault rifle, as he stood guard about 200 meters from the stricken position. He would not give his name.

Journalists were not allowed to get any closer to the site, so his claim could not be verified. But smoke was rising from the target, about 200 meters off the road, and there was a black patch in the adjoining field.

Syrian troops, Lebanese soldiers and police sealed the area, which is several kilometers north of Rayak, where the Lebanese Army has a major air base.

Lebanese Foreign Minister Mahmoud Hammoud said the attack confirmed "Israel's aggressive nature" and called on the United Nations to put a stop to Israeli airstrikes. He spoke on national television.

In Cairo, Arab League Secretary General Amr Moussa condemned the airstrike, saying it added "a dark image to current developments and the future."

In Washington, White House spokesperson Scott Stanzel said the United States was in touch with all sides and was urging maximum restraint.

There was no immediate comment from the Syrian government. But Syria's official news agency Sana confirmed two Syrians and a Lebanese soldier were wounded.

According to Lebanese security officials in Beirut, 53 km west of Sarin Tahta, two Syrian soldiers were wounded in the air raid. Syrian soldiers on the scene said their comrades suffered shrapnel injuries to the arms and legs.

A Lebanese soldier was hurt while standing guard at an adjacent position, according to a worker at a nearby gas station. A Lebanese military official confirmed one Lebanese soldier was wounded.

"The strike took us by surprise," said the 32-year-old witness, Syrian worker Riyaq Hamideh. "We could barely hear the jets when the missiles hit and smoke rose," he said.

The Sarin Tahta radar is one of many radar, tank and anti-aircraft positions that the Syrian Army maintains in Lebanon. Syria has had a force of some 25,000 troops in Lebanon since 1976.

In Jerusalem, the Israeli Cabinet issued a statement saying the radar station was attacked because Syria was responsible for a Hezbollah guerrilla raid that wounded two Israeli soldiers in the Chebaa Farms on Friday.

"This criminal activity by Hezbollah takes place under the authorization of Syria, whose Army has a presence in Lebanon," the statement said.

The Israeli Army said it "will not tolerate" Hezbollah attacks and "will take all action necessary" to protect the security of Israelis. *AP*

Police to charge US sarge for Okinawa rape

TOKYO—Police were preparing on Monday to charge a US air force sergeant in the rape of a young Japanese woman, an incident that could trigger renewed anti-US forces sentiment among local residents, domestic media said.

The local mayor plans to demand a curfew on US servicemen.

After a fourth day of questioning, police were convinced, based on witness accounts, that the 24-year-old technical sergeant raped the woman early on Friday in a parking lot in Chatan on southern Okinawa island, Kyodo news agency quoted police sources as saying.

The man has denied committing the rape, Kyodo said.

Police would apply for an arrest warrant as soon as they coordinate arrangements with the National Police Agency and the Foreign Ministry, Kyodo quoted the sources as saying.

On Monday morning, the police summoned the man, who is in the 353rd Special Operations Group, for questioning for a fourth straight day. He has not been officially detained.

After obtaining the arrest warrant, police will ask the US military authorities to give their consent for the arrest, and he can then be handed over to Japanese authorities.

He has been held in US custody and is based at the huge Kadena Air Base, the biggest in Asia.

The crime occurred just hours before Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi left for the United States to meet President George W. Bush at a getting-to-know-you summit at Camp David.

While Koizumi said the two leaders had "heart-to-heart" talks, there was little sign that Bush was ready to agree to a reduction in the 26,000 US troops to which a reluctant Okinawa has played host since World War Two. *Reuters*

Macedonia rebels take 4 villages

SKOPJE, Macedonia—Defying new international efforts to help reach a negotiated peace, ethnic Albanian rebels are reaching out for new territory in their four-month insurgency against the Slav dominated government.

A state radio report said Sunday the rebels took control of Otunje, Varvara, Setole and Brezno, ordering Slavic Macedonians they accuse of suppressing the ethnic Albanian minority to leave the area northwest of Tetovo.

Backing up the report, Setole resident Vase Zakovski told a reporter in Skopje that he left Setole after "three armed and masked people . . . told me to get out of the village."

A Human Rights Watch team met about 50 villagers leaving the towns of Setole and Otunje in a convoy, who said they had been forced to leave by armed rebels, said Peter Bouckaert, with Human Rights Watch. They said a larger group had left a day earlier.

"Certainly we are concerned that Macedonian civilians in this area were physically threatened by the (rebels)," Bouckaert said. "One of the Macedonians told me he had had a gun pointed at him and told to leave the village yesterday." *AP*

S. Korea hunts 100 N. Korean boat people

SEOUL—South Korean police are hunting more than 100 North Koreans and ethnic Koreans from China who were smuggled into the South last week, officials said yesterday.

Police said they had detained one man, who claimed to have escaped from North Korea. The man told them 107 people were on three Chinese fishing boats that put the Koreans ashore on Friday.

News of the manhunt was released two days after a family of seven North Koreans arrived in Seoul, having spent three days holed up at a United Nations refugee agency office in Beijing demanding safe passage to South Korea.

China normally sends North Koreans that it catches back to the communist state. Aid groups say escapees are sometimes executed there.

A growing number of Koreans in China are staging desperate bids to reach refuge in South Korea.

Police said the arrested man had told them the group of 108 Koreans had left China on three fishing boats on July 24 and reached the west coast of South Korea near Tangjin.

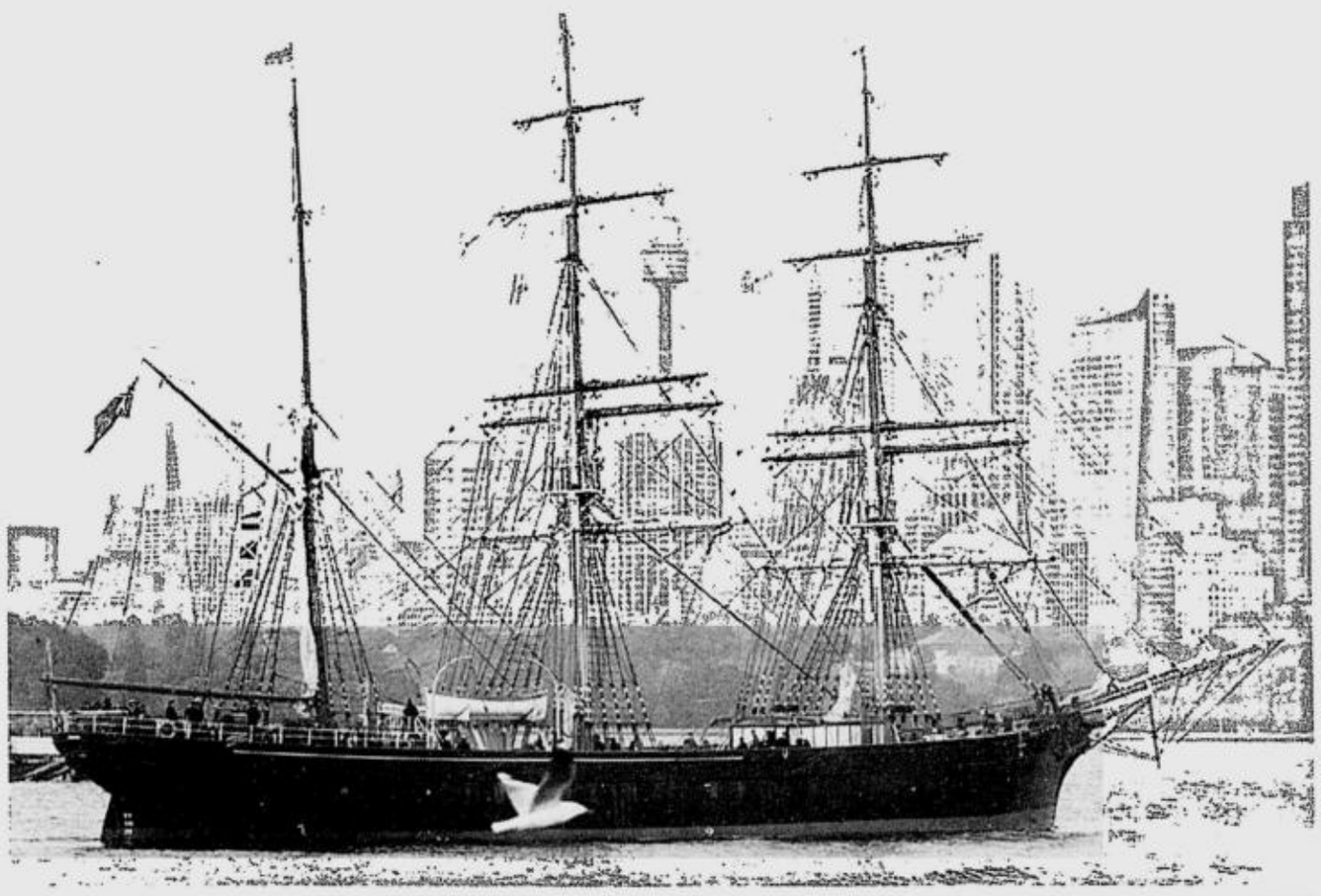
Kim Jae-kook of Tangjin police said the detained man had been left behind after sustaining a broken leg.

"We have launched a manhunt to arrest the rest of 107 illegal immigrants but we fear they may already be a long way inland," Kim said.

The arrested North Korean said he had escaped a Russian logging camp in 1994 and fled to China.

Police said they did not know how many North Koreans were among the wanted group.

Aid groups have said there are up to 300,000 North Koreans and ethnic Koreans in China waiting for a chance to get to the South. *AFP*



READY TO SAIL AGAIN REUTERS

Sydney's oldest sailing ship, the James Craig, makes its official return to service July 2 as she steams past the Sydney Harbor skyline following 30 years of restoration by hundreds of volunteers. Originally launched in 1874, the 54.7-meter-long three-masted Barque rig is undertaking working-up cruises before turning to charter work, which costs A$13,500 ($6,900) per day, including catering.

Woman to live with scorpions

KUALA LUMPUR—A Malaysian woman has begun a deadly attempt to become the "Scorpion Queen" by staying in a glass case with 2,000 scorpions for a month.

Malena Hassan, 24, moved into the two-by-six meter case in a museum in the northeastern state of Kelantan on Sunday at the launch of an international reptiles exhibition.

She aims to be listed in the Malaysia Book of Records as the first woman to stay in an enclosed case with the poisonous species.

For 30 days, Malena will eat and sleep in the cubicle with the scorpions and will be allowed to leave it for only 15 minutes daily to use the bathroom.

"It sent shivers in me to see her in the cage with the scorpions. All I can do is pray for her safety," her mother Maimum Che Muda was quoted as saying by Monday's New Straits Times.

Malena's attempt was prompted by last year's success of "Snake Woman" Fazida Mat Saad who became the first Malaysian woman to have stayed 31 days with 90 snakes in a glass cubicle.

Malaysia's "Snake King" Ali Khan Shamsudin, who trained Malena, was quoted by The Star as saying her challenge was to keep all her movements gradual as scorpions are easily startled by sudden moves. *AFP*

Sacked police chief spurns Wahid envoy post offer

BIMANTORO

JAKARTA—Indonesia's sacked national police chief General Suroyo Bimantoro yesterday rejected President Abdurrahman Wahid's offer to appoint him as ambassador to Malaysia.

"I personally and my family offer a million thanks for the respect and appreciation shown by the president . . . by offering me the post as ambassador to Malaysia," Bimantoro told a press conference.

"With all due respect, we cannot yet accept (the offer) owing to limitations on our part," he added, without elaborating.

However, Bimantoro said he now accepted his controversial dismissal as police chief by Wahid.

"I personally accept it as a reality and it is the authority of the president to replace the chief of police," he said.

Bimantoro said he had earlier refused an order by the president to submit a letter of resignation, not refused to accept the dismissal itself.

"I am well aware that because of limitations . . . I have not yet performed to the fullest and as expected by the national leader and the community," he said.

Bimantoro was suspended as police chief by Wahid on June 2, after he had refused the president's request the day before to resign.

Wahid revealed at the police force's 55th anniversary celebrations Sunday that he had appointed Bimantoro as Indonesia's new ambassador to Kuala Lumpur.

The near-blind Wahid is battling impeachment and the upper house is due to convene a special meeting on Aug. 1 to demand he accounts for his rule. He will be impeached if lawmakers reject his account.

Bimantoro had defied his suspension and continued to act as head of police, with the vocal support of the country's top police commanders and former police chiefs.

Bimantoro and his supporters, including many parliamentarians, maintain the president cannot suspend or sack the police chief without parliament's approval.

Seven leaders of parliamentary factions criticized Wahid's offer of the ambassadorial post to Bimantoro.

"This is the third violation committed by the president," Ali Marwan Hanan, chair of the Muslim-based United Development Party faction in parliament, said on television.

He was referring to Wahid's two earlier decisions to fire Bimantoro's predecessor Rusdiharjo and to decommission Bimantoro. *AFP*

US-Vietnam talks on Agent Orange make shaky start

By Steve Kirby

HANOI—Washington and Hanoi yesterday resumed troubled talks on joint research into the impact of the wartime defoliant Agent Orange amid accusations by a US scientist that Vietnamese bureaucrats are blocking investigation of a "public health emergency."

A US delegation headed by Dr. Christopher Portier of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and Dr. William Farland of the Environmental Protection Agency began two days of talks with Science and Technology Minister Chu Tuan Nha, Vietnamese officials said.

The US Embassy declined to comment ahead of the meeting, the first between the two sides since five days of talks broke down in Singapore in November.

Washington has been trying to negotiate an agreement that will allow it to fund joint research into the scale of contamination by dioxin, the cancer-causing chemical contained in Agent Orange, which Hanoi says has blighted the lives of tens of thousands of Vietnamese.

An estimated 180 kg of dioxin was contained in the 57 million liters of Agent Orange, which US forces sprayed during the war. Its continuing health effects are one of the most emotive outstanding issues between the former foes.

But the administration insists Hanoi must show greater scientific openness amid charges from some in Congress that it is exploiting the issue for propaganda purposes and as a means of getting its hands on US tax dollars.

Monday's talks got off to an unpropitious start, coming just a day after the Vietnamese minister refused a US scientist permission to continue his research into a dioxin hotspot just outside the commercial capital of Ho Chi Minh City which he believes constitutes a "public health emergency."

Dr. Arnold Schecter, a public health specialist from the University of Texas who has been conducting dioxin research in Vietnam for the past 17 years, expressed outrage at the decision to bar him from taking fresh blood and food samples for analysis from a former US air base at Bien Hoa.

"If we found dioxin contamination on this scale just outside Los Angeles, we'd have an emergency team in there within 24 hours," he said.

During a research trip to the former air base in 1999, Schecter detected the highest dioxin levels recorded anywhere in Vietnam since 1973, undermining scientists' previous assumption that the toxin was gradually broken down in the environment.

Declassified records have revealed that Bien Hoa was the site of a wartime accident in which between 5,000 and 7,000 gallons of Agent Orange were spilled.

Analysis of 25 samples collected by Schecter on research visits in 1999 and 2000, found that 24 of them had dangerously high levels of dioxin contamination.

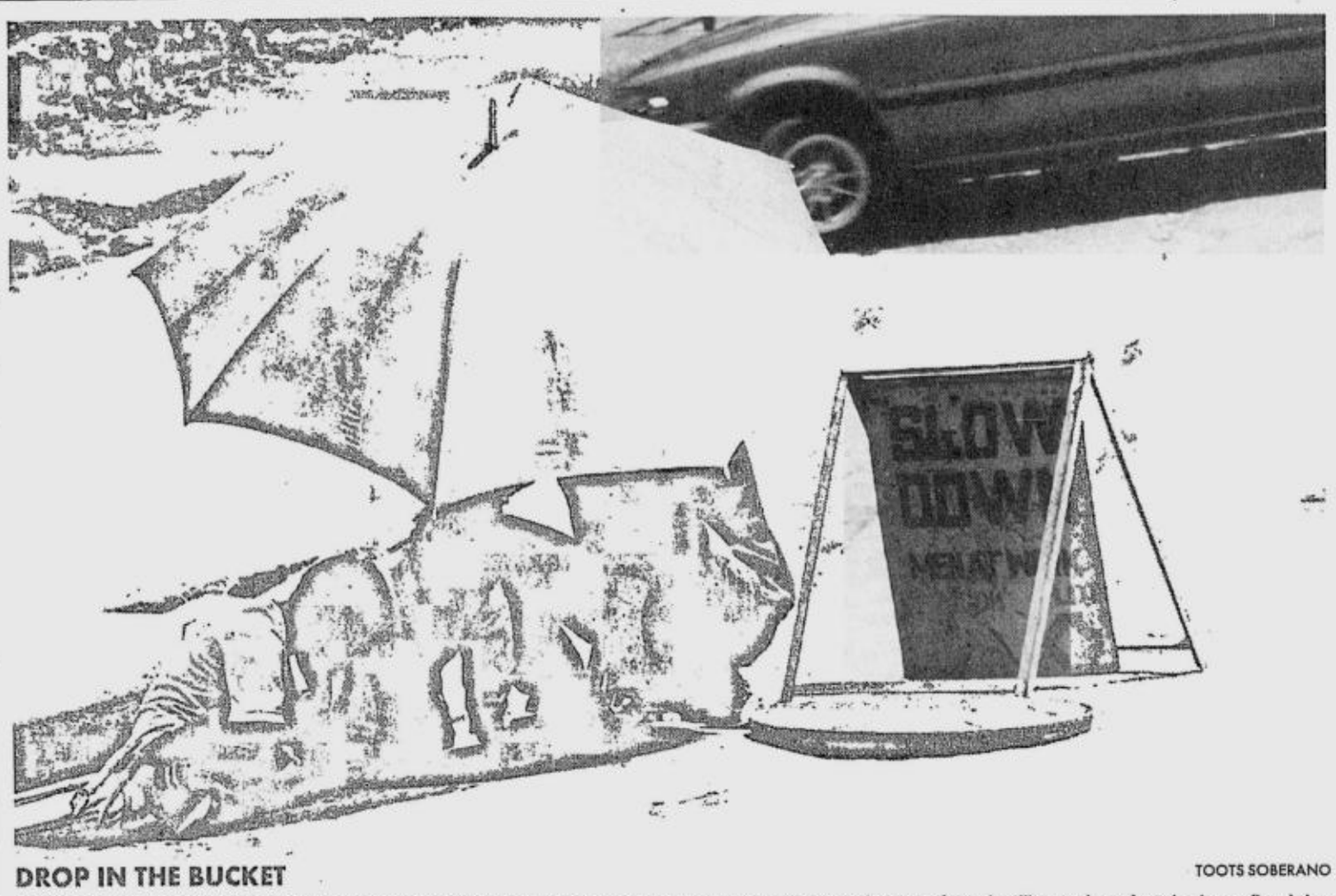
"This is an epidemic, a public health crisis," he said, adding he had published his findings in the Journal of Occupation and Environmental Medicine earlier this year.

Schecter expressed astonishment at the attitude of the new Vietnamese Agent Orange working group headed by Minister Nha, saying he had received more cooperation from the communist authorities in the dark days of the Cold War.

The US scientist said it was vital that Hanoi rapidly changes its approach as a string of other suspected dioxin hotpots dotted the country and the appetite of Congress to fund a serious scientific survey of the health risks was rapidly waning. *AFP*

Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor



DROP IN THE BUCKET TOOTS SOBERANO

Nothing is too cheap for two boys who dropped a toy in an uncovered manhole in Baguio City to leave to fate. A utility worker of a telephone firm joins them in the planning stage of what turned out to be an aborted recovery strategy.

NBI agent says Bicol needs ₱500M in anti-drug war

NAGA CITY—The government would have to spend at least P500 million a year in its war against illegal drugs in the Bicol region alone, a National Bureau of Investigation agent said here.

Pio Palencia, NBI special investigator who monitors and conducts operations against the illegal drug trade in the region, said in Legazpi City alone, at least P3.9 million worth of shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) are being traded every month.

"It means that four to five kilos of shabu are being consumed in Legazpi City alone in one month," Palencia said.

He said Metro Manila sources channel illegal drugs in Bicol through suppliers who have direct contacts with drug syndicates.

The NBI officer said suppliers are careful not to bring in more than 200 grams of shabu per transaction to enable them to post bail if they are caught.

Palencia, who was responsible for several buy-bust operations that resulted in seven death penalty convictions and 40 life sentences from 1997 to 1998, said in every Bicol town there are at least two drug suppliers who buy shabu directly from sources in Manila.

He said the suppliers maintain their own network of outlets that sell shabu to runners.

The runners who channel the illegal drugs to users are the direct contacts of the outlets.

Palencia, however, said the government's resources to arrest the growing illegal drug trade are too limited to make even a dent in the drug trade.

He said the NBI's operation against illegal drugs, covering six provinces, is not given funds.

He said P500 million would ensure the success of the fight against illegal drugs in the region.

"The government has to act decisively to seal off entries of shabu from mainland China and other countries and dismantle drug syndicates. If this is not done, the campaign against the illegal drug trade will be an endless challenge," he said. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Comelec failure to settle feuds ushers in 'caretakers'

BACOLOD CITY—The failure of the Commission on Elections to settle election disputes in two towns in Negros Occidental has opened the gates to the appointment of "caretakers" to run the affairs of the towns' governments.

The Department of Interior and Local Government has appointed "caretakers" in the two Negros Occidental towns after the winners of the races for mayor and other officials in the towns were not proclaimed.

The proclamation was stopped due to complaints filed by losing candidates.

Leticia Jesto, DILG field officer in San Enrique town, was appointed caretaker of the municipality effective July 1 because not one of the winning candidates in the town has been proclaimed.

The terms of office of incumbent local officials expired June 30.

Vice Mayor Romulo Rhoel Mogul of EB Magallona town was designated acting mayor because the Comelec failed to proclaim the winning candidate for mayor.

Rosemary Caunca, provincial local government officer, said the appointments of Jesto and Mogul were in accordance with Memorandum Circular No. 2001-14 issued by Interior Secretary Jose Lina Jr. on Saturday.

Based on the memorandum, DILG field officers would take over in areas where no candidate was proclaimed winner until President Macapagal-Arroyo appoints officers in charge.

The rule of succession would apply in areas where some of the candidates have been proclaimed but not the winner for governor or mayor.

Earlier, Rexdito Reyes, DILG regional director for Western Visayas, said should there be no proclaimed winner for the post of governor, the winning candidate for vice governor would assume the post.

The same ruling applies to the position of mayor.

The proclamation of winning candidates in San Enrique town, 37.3 kilometers south of Bacolod, was stalled by the pre-proclamation protest filed by losing candidate Julius Lanzar (Promdi).

Residents of San Enrique staged separate pickets at the Comelec provincial office in Bacolod and the San Enrique Municipal Hall to demand the proclamation of mayoral candidate Jilson Tubillara (ATUN) and the rest of the winning candidates in the municipality.

Tubillara said about 200 San Enrique residents participated in the picket at the Comelec provincial office.

Government offices in San Enrique, he added, were forced to shut down yesterday after about 1,000 residents picketed the municipal hall.

In EB Magalona, Alfonso Gamboa (ATUN), who was ahead in the Comelec tally, vowed to file civil, administrative and criminal charges against the town's election officer, Susan Araiza, if she would not proclaim him this week.

He said Araiza could be held liable for violating Comelec Resolution No. 4493, which directs the board of canvassers to reconvene and proclaim winning candidates.

The resolution also provides that all pre-proclamation cases are deemed terminated at the start of the terms of newly elected officials on July 1, Gamboa said.

The board of canvassers in EB Magalona did not proclaim Gamboa as the town's elected mayor because of the protest filed by his opponent, Rex Depasucat (UNA), before the Comelec office in Manila.

Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

All-out war bomb dug up, injures 4

COTABATO CITY—The Moro Islamic Liberation Front has urged the military to search for and destroy unexploded bombs that were dropped on MILF camps during last year's all-out war in Mindanao.

The appeal came after four Muslim civilians, including an 11-year-old boy, were seriously wounded when they accidentally plowed a 60-mm mortar shell in Matanog, Maguindanao, on Sunday.

Nasrodin, 11, Asim, 40 and Mokamad, 29, all surnamed Saligan and Maktad Mando, 39, suffered shrapnel wounds past 4 p.m. when the bomb exploded.

The village was inside a former MILF enclave straddling the towns of Matanog, Barira and Buldon, Maguindanao.

"The military should clear those areas of unexploded explosives," Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesman, said.

Kabalu said the MILF would formally request for the operation when peace talks resume in Kuala Lumpur later this month.

Army Maj. Julieto Ando, spokesperson of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, said soldiers had already detonated several unexploded bombs.

Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Greenpeace seeks probe of hospital incinerator

BY MA. DIOSA LABISTE
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—International environmental group Greenpeace will conduct its own investigation to determine if the Austrian-made incinerator of a government-run hospital here meets international safety standards.

In a letter to the Iloilo City-based newspaper The Visayas Examiner, Von Hernandez, Greenpeace campaign director for Southeast Asia, said the incinerator might be one of the 25 units donated to the Philippines that were already phased out in Austria because "they failed emission tests."

Hernandez also warned of the hazards posed by the waste facility to households and offices near it.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), he said, has identified medical waste incinerators as one of the major sources of toxic dioxin emissions in the world.

Dioxins are proven carcinogens and are linked to various reproductive disorders such as birth defects, high infant mortality rates and deficiencies in the immune system, he added.

Hernandez said the government should not insist on a "technology" that environmental agencies have no way of monitoring. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources, he said, "does not have the capacity to monitor dioxin and heavy metal emissions from incinerators."

The incinerator, a grant from the Austrian government, was built in 1998 inside the compound of the Western Visayas Memorial Hospital in Mandurriao this city.

Late last month, residents, patients and hospital personnel complained of noxious smoke coming out of the incinerator when it burns bio-medical wastes at night.

400 betting station owners cry harassment

OVER 400 operators of jai alai betting stations in the country are up in arms over what they said was a plan to put them out of business by distorting the country's laws.

In a statement, Adriano Nacorda, one of the complaining operators, said they would be forced to file charges against officials of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. if the Pagcor failed to protect their investments.

Nacorda said jai alai betting station owners are being mistaken for operators of Bingo-2-Ball, the controversial game that was stopped after it was linked to Charlie "Atong" Ang, a close friend of deposed President Estrada.

"Pagcor invited us to invest in their jai alai operations, requiring us to pour in about P1 million for each betting station," said Nacorda.

"When Pagcor invited us to invest, we expected the government to protect our investment," he added.

He said many of the betting station owners have pawned property to invest in jai alai, a government-sanctioned game.

Jai alai station operators urged the new management of Pagcor to check its interpretation of the SC ruling and "maybe they will see the light of what they have done to us."

The operators claim about 2,000 regular employees and 25,000 part-time workers are employed by the betting station owners.

"We have given employment to thousands of families and this is one reason I went to this business. Now, I tend to lose everything," said Nacorda, who admitted that he mortgaged his house for loans to finance his betting station.

According to him, no businessman in his right mind will invest in this country if even its citizens are not protected from whimsical application of laws.

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2 PM:
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by Elizabeth Thomas, General Manager, Wonderworks Kitchen
4 PM:
Fossilized Flower Making Demo
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3B, Carmen II Bldg., 342 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Pasay City, Metro Manila
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mktgwdxco@edsamail.com.ph / wdx@ailink.net / wdx@info.com.ph
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ROUNDUP

Fire razes market

ANGELES CITY—A three-hour fire in this city's biggest public market killed two men and razed 627 stalls, a police station and a drop-in center for street children on Sunday. Two prisoners also escaped from the Kababayan Center 12 when the fire started at 2:45 a.m. at the Rizal section of the San Nicolas public market, police said. The fire, the third to hit the public market in the last 30 years, destroyed property worth about P30 million. The charred bodies of two men were found near the office of the Councilmen's League of Angeles City in the market. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Truck kills 3

MAGALANG, Pampanga—Three persons were killed while 18 others were hurt Friday when a speeding cargo truck sideswiped them along the Mabalacat-Magalang Road here. Four of the victims were waiting for a ride when the truck, driven by Arnel Moron, 31, bumped them. The four were thrown into an open canal resulting in the death of Clarita Sambile, 55, and year-old Senaya Sambile. The truck sped toward the town center but bumped a parked jeepney, which fell on its side. The jeepney's 16 passengers were hurt. The truck also pinned down Alexander Garcia, 39, killing him instantly. *Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Kalinga's hope

TABUK, Kalinga—The reelection by an overwhelming majority of Rep. Laurence B. Wacnang is expected to speed up the growth of Kalinga province into one of the emerging markets in the Cordillera. Running under the People Power Coalition-Liberal Party banner, Wacnang got 42,236 votes while his two rivals got a total of 15,111 votes, or nearly 75 percent of the total votes cast in the May 14 elections. "As the Cordillera's most senior representative, Congressman Wacnang should be able to do a lot for our province," said Camilo Lammawin Jr., mayor-elect of Tabuk.

FTAAs denied

NAGA CITY—The Mines and Geosciences Bureau has denied the applications for financial and technical assistance agreement (FTAA) of three mining firms, thus, sparing 233,928 hectares in Bicol from exploration. Reynulfo Juan, Bicol MGB director, said Global Ore Minerals Inc., Golden Falcon Mineral Exploration Corp. and Gullwing Mining Inc. failed to submit environmental safety requirements under the Mining Act of 1995. Juan said the three foreign mining companies were applying to explore and mine gold, copper, zinc and silver deposits in lands straddling 13 towns jn Camarines Sur and Albay. The MGB also cancelled 60 applications for mineral production sharing agreements covering 72,654 hectares. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms. source: pagasa

Metro Manila Hi 31° Lo 23°	Baguio Hi 22° Lo 15°	Tuguegarao Hi 33° Lo 23°
Laoag Hi 32° Lo 25°	Clark Zone Hi 31° Lo 23°	Tagaytay Hi 30° Lo 21°
Legazpi Hi 32° Lo 25°	Bacolod Hi 31° Lo 25°	Roxas Hi 32° Lo 26°
Cebu Hi 30° Lo 25°	Tacloban Hi 32° Lo 25°	Gen. Santos Hi 31° Lo 24°
Zamboanga Hi 31° Lo 24°	Cagayan de Oro Hi 30° Lo 22°	Davao Hi 30° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/07/03/01

PDI BUREAUS

Northern Luzon Bureau
Room 201, Bonuan Apartelle
10 Happy Glen Loop, Baguio City
Tel. No. (074) 443-9255
Fax No. (074) 443-8971
E-mail: inq_baguio@inquirer.com .ph

Southern Luzon Bureau
23 Aurora St.,Old Albay District
Legazpi City
Tel. No . (052) 820-8402
Fax No. (052) 820-1274
E-mail: inq_bicol@inquirer.com .ph

Visayas Bureau
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18-15 Escario St., Cebu City
Tel. Nos. (032) 233-0346 / 233-0349
Fax No. (032) 232-9938
E-mail: pdivis@skylnet.net

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IFUGAO TRANSITION

New gov uses symbols to raise hopes

BY BEN MOSES EBREO
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LAGAWE, Ifugao—The traditional attire of Ifugaos has taken center stage in this province's new administration.

In an expression of pride and vision for his province's development, incoming Gov. Teodoro Baguilat Jr. made use of the G-string to symbolize the way he said he intends to govern.

Baguilat, 36, chose to wear his native G-string, which he described as the "barest of all essentials and the formal attire of the Ifugaos," during the turnover and oath-taking ceremony of newly elected provincial leaders here Saturday.

Baguilat, accompanied by several Ifugao men, emerged from the provincial capitol and proceeded to the venue of the ceremony accompanied by native songs, dances and rituals.

Thousands of Ifugaos cheered him on.

Outgoing Gov. Ildefonso Dulinayan failed to attend Baguilat's inauguration and preside over the turnover ceremony as he was arrested Thursday by National Bureau of Investigation agents on charges of extorting money from government contractors.

In a statement read by provincial legal officer Nicasio Baguilat, Dulinayan apologized for his absence in the program.

Dulinayan called the NBI accusation "baseless." "Circumstances have intervened which all of you and us for that matter have not expected. I am doing well. Despite the allegations that are still to be (proven), I am still innocent as far as the law is concerned. I still love you and worried about all of you," Dulinayan said.

He expressed confidence that in the end, "the truth will come out and my name will be cleared and the manufactured stories will be (exposed)."

Native garments

Baguilat wore native garments and accessories such as Ifugao headdresses, necklaces and pendants and carried spears and native weapons.

"The Ifugao attire will serve as a beacon (of) what I intend to do for the next three years," he said during his inaugural speech.

He said the "Pinukha," which is used for keeping betel nuts or "Momma," would serve as a charm to promote peace and love in the province and as an offering of reconciliation among political opponents and their supporters.

He said forgiveness and humility would guide him in his governance and his bid to unite the province and put it on the right track.

He said the "Hillalung" and "Ginutu," a double bladed bolo with a wooden scabbard that symbolizes industry and courage, would be adopted as a measure of performance among the province's public servants.

A basic farm tool of the Ifugaos, the "Hillalung," must always be sharp and continuously used and symbolize efforts to empower farmers.

This, he said, would be done through the marketing of the farmers' products.

He said the establishment of an agro-industrial trade center in the province would be the focus of his agricultural development concerns.

Baguilat said the growth of agriculture in the province would be supported by infrastructure projects, such as farm-to-market roads, and the improvement of existing roads.

"Road graveling and maintenance projects shall be the least of our priorities since these projects are only temporary (and) often enrich the contractors and their benefactors," he said.

Territory

Baguilat said the "Pongot," a native headdress symbolizing the courage and manliness of an Ifugao warrior, would be used as a symbol of Ifugao's fight for its territorial integrity and rights.

The province's ancestral domain areas, he said, is being endangered by Benguet, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya and Mt. Province through boundary encroachment.

He said he would strive to collect some P65 million in franchise taxes from the operation of the Magat hydroelectric power plant. The payment of taxes was delayed due to a boundary dispute with Isabela province.

THIRTY-SIX-YEAR-OLD Teodoro Baguilat Jr. takes his oath as new governor of Ifugao province in a ceremony rich in symbols, promises and hope. BEN MOSES EBREO

"We have the documents to prove that a bigger chunk of Magat belongs to the Ifugao," he said.

He said the "Pongot," "Ginutu" and "Hillalung" would be used as symbols in his fight against rampant robbery along the province's national highway.

"I will immediately convene the Provincial Peace and Order Council (PPOC) to stop this problem. Otherwise, heads will roll in the provincial police command," he said.

The "Baghe," a ceremonial spear symbolizing integrity and trustworthiness and is used by Ifugao emissaries, would be used as a symbol to promote the province, home of the world renowned rice terraces.

Baguilat also wore the "Balituk" and "Tang-go," gold pendants and necklaces, to symbolize wealth. He said while Ifugaos are not wealthy, "first and foremost, we have our children (who are) far more valuable than the riches of the industrialized world."

He urged Ifugaos to double their investments in child-friendly programs like health, nutrition and education to ensure that the basic rights of Ifugao children are protected.

Part of this program, he said, is the reduction of the number of the province's malnutrition cases until 2004. He also vowed to focus on primary health care programs and services by hiring more personnel in the villages.

He also vowed to build more health centers and improve existing hospitals.

He said hospitals would be built in the remote towns of Asipulo and Aguinaldo. To lessen the burden on local governments and to instill the spirit of cooperativism, these hospitals would be run by a cooperative and managed by residents, he said.

Environment, tourism

On the environment, Baguilat said he would focus on policies that would maximize the use of the province's resources and conserve those that would be needed by future generations.

He said he would call for a gathering of woodcarvers, environment officials, environmentalist groups and provincial officials to draw up guidelines that would ease the burden on wood carvers in getting permits to gather raw materials and transport their products.

He said the guidelines would include a requirement to plant trees.

"The policy shall guarantee that for every tree cut, 30 or more seedlings shall be planted and taken care of in exchange," he said.

Baguilat said he would use the "Baya-ung," a nobleman's blanket and symbol of moral authority and Ifugao nobility, to establish moral ascendancy.

"In order for your governor to be truly honorable, he must attempt to establish moral ascendancy in the government bureaucracy. We will (stop) graft and corruption in this provincial government," he said.

Baguilat said the "Binuglan" or G-string, the basic attire of Ifugao men and the most enduring symbol of their culture, would serve as his inspiration in establishing schools and heritage centers that would teach traditional performing arts and indigenous crafts and cultural subjects to Ifugaos.

Among the subjects are Ifugao history, mythology, loom-weaving and wine-making, he said.

Under this project, Baguilat said the first school of living traditions would be launched on July 11 in his native Kiangan town where he served for two terms as mayor.

"To remember the policy directions and priorities of your governor, just visualize him in his native attire... I may (not meet) all of your expectations but I assure you I will serve you well," he said.

JDV allies with Estrada backers for top House post

BACOLOD CITY—The Nationalist People's Coalition of Estrada ally Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco and Rep. Jose de Venecia have entered into an alliance to boost De Venecia's chance of becoming Speaker again.

But Negros Ocidental Rep. Apolinario Lozada (Lakas) said the alliance is "solely for the purpose" of giving De Venecia the top House post.

Lozada said the alliance won't hold in the provinces, where the Lakas and the NPC are in conflict over various issues.

Lozada said he does not believe that President Macapagal-Arroyo played a part in forming the Lakas coalition in the NPC to help De Venecia capture the House top post.

"It's just really between Congressman de Venecia and (Eduardo) Cojuangco," Lozada said. Cojuangco was one of the closest allies of ousted President Joseph Estrada.

Cojuangco, who heads the NPC, also backs the United Negros Alliance (UNA) whose candidates captured most of the top elective posts in Negros Occidental.

Lozada belongs to a bloc in the House that calls itself progressive. It is composed of 41 congressmen from different political parties who earlier objected to De Venecia being Speaker again.

On Thursday, however, the progressive bloc decided they would support De Venecia on condition that they would continue to exist as a conscience bloc in the House.

Lozada said they agreed to support De Venecia for the sake of unity in the Lakas-NUCD. But the bloc, he said, also demanded three things that De Venecia should agree to immediately.

These were: transparency in the affairs of the House, giving strong weight on qualifications in the selection of chairs and vice chairs of House committees, and that the alliance would not hold beyond De Venecia's ambition to become Speaker again.

"If De Venecia does not honor our agreement that was all verbal, then the fight goes on," Lozada said.

A member of the so-called conscience bloc had withdrawn his bid to become Speaker.

Cebu City Rep. Raoul del Mar (Promdi), however, said he would still fight for new politics in the House.

Del Mar said he had no choice but to quit the race after President Macapagal apparently supported De Venecia.

Del Mar said during a meeting between leaders of the conscience bloc and the President in Malacañang last Friday, she acknowledged reports that De Venecia already have the numbers.

"I got the impression she was in effect conceding that De Venecia would now be considered the PPC candidate although she stressed that she was maintaining a hands-off policy on the issue," Del Mar said in a statement.

Also present in the meeting were other aspirants for the speakership—Representatives Florencio Abad (Batanes), Brown Sandoval (Palawan) and Carlos Padilla (Nueva Vizcaya).

He said the President appealed to them to remain in the majority to prevent division.

"The intramural within the PPC for the House leadership should now be over and it's time to heed the President's appeal (for unity)," Del Mar said. *Carla Gomez and Edra Benedicto, PDI Visayas Bureau*

New strain of dengue plagues Davao

DAVAO CITY—A new strain of dengue fever is plaguing this city, packing in patients in a government-run hospital here.

Dr. Jean Tay, chief of clinics of the government-owned Davao Medical Center, said they have been receiving a rising number of patients, majority of whom are children, since March this year.

"The new strain seems to be very virulent," she said.

But Tay said doctors have no means of knowing what kind of strain they are confronted with since the technology needed for this is not available locally.

"The money we would spend on equipment I would rather spend on prevention," she said.

She said there are no data yet on how many people have died from the new dengue strain, but she estimated that over 300 people have been stricken by the virus in the last four months.

"The minimum (number of deaths) could be three of the four or five who suffered from dengue shock syndrome," she said.

Dengue shock syndrome is the worst stage of dengue fever. At this stage, the mortality rate is high.

But Tay said the patients who were admitted in the hospital had just mild and not life threatening cases. *Joel B. Escovilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Malpractice victim's ma sues docs, nurses

BY GERRY T. PAGHARION
PDI Visayas Bureau

ROXAS CITY—The mother of a victim of alleged medical malpractice has sued an executive and three personnel of the government-run Roxas Memorial Provincial Hospital (RMPH) for the death of her son.

Charged with reckless imprudence resulting in homicide were RMPH chief officer Dr. Evelyn Albaña, attending physician Rea Roldan, nurse Renna May Malan and nursing aid Rhea Aguiluz.

Jonna Leonor, mother of victim John Vic, filed the complaint at the City Prosecutor's Office on June 20.

She claimed that her son, who was confined for intestinal parasitism at the hospital, died on July 16 last year after Aguiluz injected an oral suspension into John Vic's dextrose.

Attached to her complaint was a copy of the report made by the provincial government's fact-finding committee that found Malan and Aguiluz liable for the boy's death.

Acting on the report, Gov. Vicente Bermejo fired Malan and Aguiluz from the RMPH on Aug. 10 last year and banned them from employment in all hospitals run by the provincial government.

Jonna also submitted to the city prosecutor's office a copy of an autopsy report prepared by the National Bureau of Investigation regional office in Iloilo City that listed pneumonia as the cause of the boy's death.

In her affidavit, Jonna said she and her common-law husband, Vicente de Pablo, rushed John Vic to the RMPH on July 15 after the boy complained of stomachache.

After checking the boy's breathing, Roldan, the boy's attending physician, asked Jonna if the boy had a cough. The mother said "no."

About 10 a.m. the next day, Jonna said Roldan told her to buy Quantrel Suspension to be taken orally by her son as a purgative.

Jonna said her husband gave the medicine to the Nurses Station but Malan, the nurse in charge, told them to keep the medicine because she would send somebody to help them administer the medicine to John Vic.

About 6 p.m. July 16, Jonna said Aguiluz entered their room and asked for the Quantrel Suspension. De Pablo gave the medicine to Aguiluz who then asked Jonna to hold the boy while she was administering the medicine.

When the boy refused to take the medicine, Aguiluz decided to inject the medicine into the boy's dextrose. She reportedly assured Jonna that the procedure was safe.

Jonna said she told Aguiluz not to inject the medicine because the doctor had instructed her that it must be taken orally.

But Aguiluz allegedly ignored her and injected the suspension into the dextrose.

When the medicine was half empty, the boy took a long breath and began to shake. Jonna told Aguiluz to stop the procedure but the nursing aide allegedly assured her that the boy was just reacting to the medicine.

Minutes later, she said, her son died.

Berroya stops rice shipment for Chavit province

BY CRISTINA ARZADON
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

CURRIMAO, Ilocos Norte—A cargo vessel was stopped Friday from unloading 34,000 rice bags intended for Ilocos Sur following reports that the shipment was illegal.

Acting on orders from "higher office," the regional police's intelligence command led by SPO4 Mike Digap asked the Starlight Maritime Inc. (SMI), a cargo handler based at the international port here, to suspend the unloading while shipment documents were being verified.

Digap said they inspected the shipment on request of Supt. Reynaldo Berroya, chief of the Philippine National Police's intelligence office.

Berroya allegedly received information from the Bureau of Customs that a rice shipment was being smuggled into the province through the Currimao port.

The vessel, MV For Lavida, operated by the DJCA Merchandising in Tagum City, docked here on June 28. Its point of origin was Port Malalag in Davao del Sur.

The shipment, worth P27.2 million, was intended for consignees Crisel General Merchandising, F.A. Merchandising and Maral Merchandising, all based in Ilocos Sur.

It was composed of 5,000 bags of "fancy" rice, 12,000 bags of regular milled rice and 17,000 bags of well-milled rice.

The SMI immediately unloaded the rice to at least six trucks and started the delivery after the vessel dropped anchor here.

Police, however, intercepted the trucks in Badoc town and ordered their drivers to return to Currimao while the shipment's documents are being verified.

The shipment only resumed late Friday night when Bill Fariñas, SMI's director for security and operations, convinced authorities that the shipper's papers were in order.

Fariñas showed authorities receipt payments of the shipping company, including a certification from the National Food Authority here that the shipment is considered a local inter-island transaction.

He said the vessel was to dock in Port Salomague in Ilocos Sur but a grounded Malaysian vessel in that province's port allegedly prevented the M/V For Lavida from docking.

He said they unloaded the rice as soon as the NFA completed classifying the shipment and issued the certification to transfer the cargo.

"(The shipment) was delayed but this is part of business. It is a blessing in disguise because it will hopefully stop people from speculating. Everything is legitimate," Fariñas told the INQUIRER.

Ador sparks network war

(From page A1)

musketeers are dzBB anchor Arnold Clavio, whose morning radio program is aired by GMA-7, and dzMM anchor Angelo Palmones of the ABS-CBN network.

Clavio broke the story about Ador's confessed involvement in alleged illegal activities of the now defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force.

The GMA-7 broadcaster has been interviewing Ador regularly on his radio program "Double A sa Double B" since he met the latter last week.

On Saturday, during his own radio program, Palmones of ABS-CBN commented on Ador's allegations.

"Since (the police are) already doubting Ador, my initial reaction on radio was, '*Kasi kayo, naniniwala kayo sa siete* (it's your fault for believing 'seven')," he told the INQUIRER, recalling what he said.

Palmones' co-anchor, Frankie Evangelista, asked, "*Ano'ng siete* (What do you mean by seven)?"

To which Palmones answered, "*Chismis* (Gossip)."

Immediately after the program, Palmones said, he got calls from listeners asking why he was attacking GMA 7.

"Not even once did I mention the name of the network, any talk show or any radio program," Palmones told the INQUIRER.

"The TOA (tape on air) of the program can bail me out," he added.

But before Clavio went on the air yesterday morning, Palmones made an apparent reference to the allegedly unfair news coverage of "that other station."

When Clavio interviewed Ador later, it was his turn to make some digs of his own.

"How do you respond to insinuations that we are deliberately isolating you so that you will not give your story to other networks?" Clavio asked Ador in Filipino.

"Well, if the other stations really want to interview me, they should find a way. I really don't know why Channel 2 cannot contact me," Ador answered.

"Yes, that's right," Clavio said. "I mean, we are not really keeping you isolated, are we? Why, the INQUIRER has interviewed you several times. If anyone really wanted to talk to you, they should find a way, shouldn't they?"

Airing sides

"You know," Clavio added, "another station complains about the way we air only one side while they have a balanced story on this issue. How is that possible when they only air the side of Ping (former PAOCTF chief Sen. Panfilo Lacson)?"

He went on: "Yes, they air the side of Ping, but not the other side. In this station, we air both sides. And then they say that we are not the balanced station!"

Earlier in the interview, the topic came up when the conversation shifted to Ador's choice to give his story to GMA-7.

"I gave my story to dzBB because in that other station, it is known that Ping has a lot of fans. It would be difficult for me to give my story to that station because I might get into trouble," Ador said.

He said he had actually wanted to give the scoop to GMA-7's Mike Enriquez, whose morning radio program airs ahead of Clavio's. Unable to talk to Enriquez, Ador looked for Clavio instead.

Not picking fight

Palmones said he was not trying to pick a fight with his fellow broadcaster.

Palmones, who teaches broadcast writing at the UP College of Mass Communication, said he points out to his students that their stories should be studied and reviewed before they come out.

"Any story should stand on solid ground, *hindi chismis*," he said.

On Saturday morning, Palmones also interviewed Teresita Ang-See, spokesperson of the Citizens Action Against Crime (CAAC). The topic was the recent spate of kidnappings that have continued to victimize many Chinese-Filipino families.

"Tessie wanted me to ask her why Arnold was saying she is part of the destabilization plot against the government," Palmones said.

"But I told her we have to abide with KBP (Kapisanan ng mga Brodkasters sa Pilipinas) standards and we cannot attack a fellow journalist on the air.

"She wanted to discuss it, but I (had) the decency not to ask her that question. If I want to start a fight, I could have easily done it," Palmones said.

'Very clear'

Clavio, however, insisted that Palmones was being deliberately provocative.

"When he interviewed Ping about Ador, he (Palmones) told him, '*Kung sa amin pumunta yon (Ador), hindi namin papatulan dahil sisiraan lang kayo niyan,*'" Clavio said.

"It's very clear that he's trying to destroy a fellow broadcaster. What has he got against me? It's very frustrating to know that another broadcaster is trying to put you down simply because you got the exclusive story and scooped them," Clavio added.

"I'm not trying to hide Ador from them. Why don't they look for him? The problem is, Ador doesn't want to talk to them because they're pro-Ping.

"I hope they don't use the show to divert the issue. The issue is they cannot interview Ador. Being a journalist, our mission is to search for truth. Now that someone wants to tell the truth, we are simply giving him a chance because no one wanted to listen to him before," Clavio concluded.

'Ador' wants new test; Ping seeks probe

(From page A1)

other thing."

He said he suspects that the people behind the alleged campaign to discredit him are in the higher echelons of government.

But asked whether he has specific suspects in mind, Lacson replied: "I don't want to speculate, (which is why) I want an investigation."

Lacson, former head of the now defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force, said he would not initiate a Senate inquiry himself. "I'll suggest to some senators to conduct an investigation to find out who are these people behind Ador, who are his handlers," he said.

Results of Ador's polygraph test will not be ready for two or three days, NBI officials said. Lie detector tests are widely perceived to be unreliable and their results are often rejected in court as evidence of guilt or innocence.

But Justice Secretary Hernando Perez told reporters that while such results are "not conclusive," they would still assist prosecutors in assessing whether Ador would be useful in building a criminal case against those he has implicated.

Ador arrived at the NBI in Manila around 9 a.m., wearing a cap, sunglasses, and a large gray handkerchief covering the lower half of his face. He was accompanied by his wife and his lawyer.

The former agent refused to utter a single word, despite several attempts by reporters to interview him.

Last night, he demanded to retake the polygraph test in the presence of his lawyers and representatives from the INQUIRER and GMA-7.

Tense

"I took the test twice. I don't know why that is the case. I am waiting for the results right now," Ador said in a text message to an INQUIRER reporter after the polygraph exam.

Ador believes that test results indicating that he was probably telling the truth would mean a chance to finally meet with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

He has also expressed concern that test results not in his favor could mean he would lose his chance to talk to Ms Macapagal.

Ador claimed he was tense during the first after being hounded by the press and being given a runaround by NBI employees, and said he feared that his tension might have resulted in inaccurate test readings.

"It was like a wild goose chase. Reporters were chasing me when I went to the second floor for the polygraph test. Then I was asked to go to the first floor and then again to the second floor because the test would be held there," Ador told the INQUIRER.

Ador said reporters hounded him as he went from one room to another looking for the polygraph examiner.

"When I finally saw the polygraph machine, it was like an electric chair, so it added to my tension. And the examiner kept on telling me not to move, so I just became more tense," he added.

'One-tenth of truth'

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said Ador's 24-page affidavit was not signed in the presence of a lawyer and was not admissible in court.

But Ador, in an interview Sunday, said the sworn affidavit was executed with the help of lawyer Batas Mauricio and "is just one-tenth of what I have to tell the President."

Wycoco said the statement needs to be studied, re-examined and purged of errors and inconsistencies.

"He has mentioned many situations and incidents," Wycoco said. "We expect this to be a long-drawn question-and-answer session."

Ador's affidavit detailed Lacson's alleged plan to abduct or assassinate high-profile businessmen and political figures who played key roles in ousting ex-President Joseph Estrada.

The former agent also claimed to have information on the alleged murder of casino employee Edgar Bentain, who disappeared after allegedly taking a video of then presidential candidate Estrada playing baccarat at the Grand Boulevard Hotel casino in Manila.

Ping suspects . . .

The NBI chief stressed that he and his men did not take Ador's charges "at face value." He said Ador's allegations would be reviewed against data independently gathered by the bureau's investigators.

Asked if Ador would be placed under the government's witness protection program, Wycoco said that would depend on the final results of the investigation and whether the ex-agent chooses to apply for state protection.

Perez said the justice department would be ready to place him under witness protection "once we have established that and his testimony is useful."

But "first, we want to establish whether Ador is telling the truth," he stressed.

To establish motive

Lacson said he hoped that a Senate probe would not only show that Ador was lying, but would also establish the "motive" behind the alleged smear job against him.

The senator, who has been the subject of numerous investigations in the Senate and the House, told reporters that officials invited to testify at a future inquiry would not be subjected to a "shakedown," which he claimed to have experienced.

"I don't want to impose that on my former colleagues in law-enforcement," he said.

Senate observers note that Berroya would likely be at the top of the list of officials invited to testify at a congressional investigation.

Lacson also promised not to recommend that the budget of the PNP intelligence unit be reduced or altogether done away with, saying "I won't resort to that cruel" move.

Can't let it pass

Lacson brushed off Ador's challenge to him to take a lie detector test, remarking: "I (won't) dignify his accusations."

But he said he was bothered by continuing reports linking him to kidnap-for-ransom activities.

"I've never involved myself in kidnap-for-ransom activities—not then, not now. My involvement (as PNP chief) was to solve and rescue victims," he said.

"I did not even steal government funds when I was chief of the PNP," he said. "I did not accept from illegal activities like gambling. Why will I dip my fingers into such illegal activities now?"

He admitted that although there were opportunities for him to "earn easier money," he did not succumb to temptation.

"I led by good example. That's why it really hurts if there is an accusation such as that. I cannot let it pass," he said.

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JDV is it . . .

(From page A1)

Macapagal-Arroyo is certain that De Venecia will clinch the premier post in the House to push her anti-poverty program and peace process initiatives.

Though the President had said she will not intervene in the fight for Speaker, she told the INQUIRER last week that De Venecia already "has the numbers."

With 140 votes, De Venecia would have secured more than the majority votes that he needs to reclaim the House leadership, which he last held in the 10th Congress.

There are 208 congressional seats for district representations and at least 10 more for party-list representatives.

Last major rival exits

Rep. Vicente Sandoval, the last major aspirant in the race supported by the Lakas-NUCD progressive block, had withdrawn from the race and declared his support for De Venecia.

The only ones left to challenge De Venecia are Batanes Rep. Butch Abad of the Liberal party and Nueva Ecija Rep. Carlos Padilla.

De Venecia got the winning numbers after he won over the breakaway Lakas-NUCD faction led by the father-and-son team of Reps. Vicente Sandoval (Palawan) and Federico Sandoval (Malabon-Navotas).

"With (Vicente) Sandoval back in the fold, Lakas has been restored to full force," said Camarines Sur Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr.

With 86 seats, Lakas NUCD has the most number in the Lower House.

A House source said the elder Sandoval, who was one of those being tapped as an alternative candidate for Speaker, would either be named to the powerful Commission on Appointments or chair of the House committee on appropriations.

Prayer for guidance

Last month, the President said she would pray for guidance when asked if she would make known her choice of Speaker and Senate President.

In her press conference last Friday, the President had her answer.

"Well, in my prayer time I discerned that the Lord told me I don't need to interfere," she said.

"After all these are two independent branches of government and it really has to be an unusual circumstance if the President will interfere and I'm not interfering," she stressed.

De Venecia ran for President in 1998 but lost to Joseph Estrada.

Some members of the People Power Coalition were opposed to De Venecia because of his reported image as a traditional politician ("trapo"). They said it would be against the President's "new politics."

De Venecia however stressed that he is a "good trapo."

Presidential Political Adviser Jose "Joey" Rufino cited De Venecia's record as the Speaker who formed the "rainbow coalition" from only a few Lakas members at the start of the Ramos administration.

The President's party mates and allies have given her a vote of confidence to choose the Speaker. But Ms Macapagal, a former senator, had told them to settle the Speakership fight among themselves.

With the withdrawal of De Venecia's rivals, the political coalition that helped sweep President Macapagal to power now holds the key to her legislative agenda to eliminate mass poverty among Filipinos.

Among the other aspirants who had earlier withdrawn from the race and declared for De Venecia were Rep. Raul del Mar of Promdi, the Lakas group led by Rep. Prospero Pichay; the Lakas faction of incumbent Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II; the Lakas group that supported Rep. Rudy Albano; the Lakas faction of Rep. Edelmiro Amante, former executive secretary whose candidacy was pushed by the Council for Philippine Affairs (Copa); Rep. Augusto Syjuco of the LDP Conscience Bloc; and Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzales of the Nacionalista Party with its other luminaries in Rep. Richard Gordon and former Vice President Salvador Laurel.

Rep. Gilbert Teodoro of the Nationalist People's Coalition also withdrew from the race last month, and both the NPC and Lakas haye since successfully pursued talks for a coalition in the lower chamber.

Earlier, De Venecia had received the support of Aksyon Demokratiko headed by Education Secretary Raul Roco and its House members, Rep. Choy Roco and Rep. Willie Villarama; the PDP Laban House contingent led by newspaper publisher and Rep. Teddyboy Locsin; and Reporma led by Rep. Samuel Dangwa.

In their endorsement of De Venecia, they endorsed his ability to unite the House and the country.

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GMA gives P10B to AFP

(From page A1)

and not next year, as she had earlier announced, after learning that the current P5.4-billion budget would only be spent by the end of the year.

She said she had instructed the budget department to release P5.4 billion to the fund, and the finance and defense departments to find the balance of P4.6 billion to raise the total modernization outlay to P10 billion.

"Earlier when I spoke to the (AFP), I said that when you have spent one-third of this P5.4 billion, I would replenish it. But now I realized that this could not be spent until the end of the year, because it's only then that the bidding process will be over. Therefore, I have to revise my commitment," Ms Macapagal said.

Her announcement elicited applause from officials of the military's four branches of service, airmen and civilian employees gathered at the PAF presidential hangar.

Sell presidential plane

Ms Macapagal also said she had directed Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes to sell the presidential plane and donate the proceeds to the PAF modernization program.

"With only one C-130 in operation, the Air Force has proudly achieved so much way beyond the endurance of man and machine. What more if you have more C-130s?" the President said, noting that the lone transporter was being used not only to move troops and relief goods but also to respond to disasters such as the recent eruptions of Mayon Volcano in Albay.

"The transfer on a grant basis of one more C-130 is now going through final processing by the US Congress, and we are assured of approval. You can expect to have another C-130 soon, courtesy of our friends in the US," she said, adding that five upgraded Huey helicopters were also arriving in the next few months under the same setup.

In his remarks, General Defensor stressed the need for a modern air defense system.

"It was precisely because we did not have this kind of capability that those extremists in Basilan and Jolo were able to create the ugly chapters in our national life," he said, referring to the Abu Sayyaf.

Ms Macapagal once more thanked the PAF for its role in People Power II, which ousted Joseph Estrada and installed her as President.

Defensor is a brother of Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, a staunch Estrada ally. He joined then AFP Chief of Staff Reyes when the latter withdrew the military's support from Estrada.

Ceremony

The anniversary ceremony was highlighted by the traditional high-speed flight of PAF fighter planes, a pass and review of the PAF forces, and the presentation to the President of the "command helmet" or "Helmet of Freedom."

The PAF men and women who saw action in battles against insurgents and threats to the country's territorial integrity were given medals and awards.

The President, dressed in a *barong*, rode an open jeep marked "Commander in Chief" in the traditional trooping of the line. She was accompanied by Defensor and PAF ground commander Brig. Gen. Augusto Francia.

The ceremony would have been perfect if not for a couple of hitches.

The jeep carrying the President and Defensor made two false starts during the trooping of the line. The second time the jeep did not start, Defensor alighted and led the President to walk the few meters to the stage.

And then there was the parachute of a skydiving airman that got caught in the perimeter fence of the presidential hangar.

Nevertheless, the President said she was happy to be back at the Villamor Air Base, from where, she noted, she took off every week en route to her official destinations.

'Military operations hinder release of hostages'

(From page A1)

nied this in a television interview.

"That is not true. He (Lidjal) is not with the MILF," Kabalu also said.

But in Manila, Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan, spokesperson of the Armed Forces, identified Lidjal as a battalion commander of the MILF in Basilan.

Adan said information coming from AFP ground commanders appeared to show that the Abu Sayyaf and the MILF were at odds "over an agreement, whatever that is."

The self-styled negotiator, who had said that Chua and Bautista would be released in 48 hours, said other hostages under the care of the Lantawan-based Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon would also be freed.

"This will be a package deal. Not only two but six hostages will be released maybe in two to three days from now," he said.

He named the others as Dos Palmas hostages Angie Montealegre and Ma. Fe Rosadeno and Lamitan nurses Ediborah Yap and Reina Malonzo.

"(There's a) bonus. (Let's hope) the release (will proceed)," he said.

Sobero

Adan dismissed a claim made by MILF ground commanders that Guillermo Sobero—one of the three Americans taken by the Abu Sayyaf on May 27 from Dos Palmas resort in Palawan—was still alive.

"We have no reason to believe he is alive," Adan said, and cited the testimony of freed hostage Francis Ganzon that on the night of June 11, Sobero was tied up, separated from the other hostages, and was never seen again.

On June 12, Sabaya announced that his group had beheaded Sobero as an "Independence Day gift" to the government.

While Sobero's body has yet to be found, the AFP now presumes him dead.

"If Sobero is alive, then well and good," Adan said. But he challenged the MILF to produce the American's "living body" to prove its claim.

Struggling with grief

In Corona, California, the Associated Press quoted Sobero's estranged wife as saying that she was taking strength from her children even as she struggled with her grief.

"There are moments where I feel I can't do this . . . where I just want to walk out," Fanny Sobero said in an interview published Sunday in the Riverside Press-Enterprise. "Then I see my babies' faces, and I know I'm the only one they have."

But Fanny Sobero believes her husband is alive.

She said her life focus had shifted from raising her three young boys and running the family's waterproofing business to juggling calls from the US Federal Bureau of Investigation and State Department, and the media.

All the while, she said, she was struggling to pay her bills and cope with conflicting reports about whether her husband was dead or alive.

She said she had told her two older sons, Paul and Andre, ages six and three, that their father was in an accident in the Philippines and was badly hurt.

Louis, who just turned two, is too young to grasp the situation, she said.

Divorcing

Fanny said Paul cried for the first time last week, and Andre had also cried and demanded to see his father.

She said she still cared for her husband although they were in the process of divorcing. She described him as "a loving father."

She said she was focusing on the present and striving to provide a sense of stability for her children.

"In the last week I realized that I have to go back and start to get our lives back on a routine, for our kids' sake," Fanny said. "They're so needy of me right now. I realize that I need to concentrate on them."

Arrests

Three more suspected Abu Sayyaf members, Mupin Limbong and Yacub Aiyub, were arrested by authorities on Saturday while they were attending a death anniversary in Tumahubong, Sumisip, Basilan.

Col. Danilo Servando, AFP Southern Command spokesperson, said Limbong and Aiyub, who fell into the hands of the Task Group Tornado of the 103rd Army Brigade, were identified as among those who staged the March 2000 kidnapping of teachers and students in Sumisip.

Residents who noticed the presence of the two were the ones who quickly informed the military, Servando said.

In Sulu, Abu Sayyaf member Jackarias "Jack" Abdurahim, 25 and a resident of Bus-Bus, was also arrested by members of Task Force Tornado.

He is said to be 55th in the military's order of battle.

In Patikul, Sulu, soldiers belonging to the 6th Scout Ranger Company and the 4th Scout Ranger Battalion engaged some 60 armed members of the Abu Sayyaf in a 30-minute battle on Sunday morning.

A soldier identified as Pfc. Rommel C. Baisa was wounded during the battle. The military claimed that the bandits also suffered casualties.

Odd man out

The MILF is playing the odd man out role in war-torn Basilan.

On one hand, it has ordered its fighters to arrest Abu Sayyaf gunmen who are the subject of more than a month of military operations.

Yet at the same time, the MILF has instructed its warriors not to allow pursuing government forces to encroach on its bases, and to engage soldiers if necessary.

But one thing is sure, according to Kabalu: The MILF will not move out of Basilan despite an earlier warning by the AFP that it will confront any armed group it encounters along the way.

Adan earlier said that government forces were priming for a "decisive battle" to end the hostage crisis.

"We have no reason to pull back. Where will our fighters go? They are native residents," Kabalu told defense reporters by phone.

Kabalu claimed the MILF had 2,000 fighters in the towns of Tipo-Tipo, Lantawan and Tuburan.

But the AFP estimates the number of secessionist rebels there at 500.

Kabalu also scored the AFP for previously charging that the MILF was giving sanctuary and combat support to Abu Sayyaf gunmen.

He said the AFP was dragging the MILF into the picture "in order to justify the future failure of their operation."

"We have in fact instructed our fighters in Basilan to arrest the Abu Sayyaf if they encounter them," Kabalu said.

Scapegoat

"They (the AFP) are using close to 10,000 men, but their mission has yet to be accomplished. They said we helped the Abu Sayyaf in Lamitan. We never helped them. They are using us as a scapegoat," he added.

Kabalu said MILF fighters would go on active defense if pursuing government forces hit their bases in Basilan.

On paper, there is a truce between the government and the MILF as the two parties have resumed peace negotiations.

Kabalu said: "They (the MILF fighters) have to fight back. That is the existing order, although we have (an MILF-declared) suspension of offensive military action in place."

The MILF declared the suspension of offensives more than a month ago, in response to the Macapagal administration's own declaration of a suspension.

Asked if MILF fighters would pursue military forces that would attack their positions, Kabalu said: "That would be at the discretion of our field commanders."

Challenge

Kabalu said that if the government believed that the MILF was working in tandem with the Abu Sayyaf, it should bring up the matter in the second round of peace talks scheduled to start in the third week of July in Kuala Lumpur.

He said the members of the government peace panel did not raise the issue in the first round of talks in Tripoli "because they have no justification that we are indeed supporting the Abu Sayyaf."

Kabalu said the MILF might protest the military's continued allegations of a tie-up with the Abu Sayyaf "at the proper time."

Jeepney drivers seek 50c fare hike

(From page A1)

Piston, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan), Kilusang Mayo Uno and Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) staged a two-hour rally in front of the main office of Pilipinas Shell in Makati City.

They demanded a price rollback, claiming that greed was the primary motivation behind the price increases.

Instead of a price rollback, the public may yet get another round of fuel price increases.

Phased increase

"Our lower-than-expected increase considers the calls of the government and the public for a phased-increase approach to our product pricing," Virginia A. Ruivivar, Petron corporate communications manager, said in a statement.

Last month, Ruivivar said Petron was expecting an increase of 53 centavos per liter.

She said the price adjustment took into account the increase in the cost of Dubai crude from an average of $24.18 per barrel in April to $25.60 per barrel in May.

She also noted that the peso depreciated against the US dollar from 50.30 in April to 50.50 in May.

As a rule, local petroleum prices increase by 35 centavos per liter for every dollar increase in crude prices. And local oil prices go up by 15 centavos per liter for every P1-depreciation of the Philippine currency against the dollar.

For its part, Caltex said it raised its prices in response to market conditions.

Petron's Blaze, a high-octane premium gasoline, now costs P19.49 per liter; its XCS Plus, P19.01; unleaded gasoline P18.40, diesel, P14.64; and kerosene, P14.14.

Caltex is now charging P19.08 per liter for Vortex Gold, P18.57 for Vortex Silver, P14.73 for diesel and P14.78 for kerosene.

Pilipinas Shell's wholesale posted price for Shell Super is now P18.61 per liter; unleaded gasoline, P18.10; diesel, P14.36; and kerosene, P13.93.

Prices of all other petroleum products remain the same.

"We are hoping that the current crude oil price and peso-dollar rate stabilize so that present pump prices hold in the coming weeks," Pilipinas Shell vice president Reynaldo Gamboa said.

Like Shell, new oil firm Eastern Petroleum Corp. raised its prices on Sunday.

An official of TotalFinaElf Philippines Corp. said the company would increase its prices within the week.

Energy Secretary Vincent S. Perez said the new round of fuel price increases should not be blamed on the deregulation of the oil industry.

Critics have said the deregulation made price increases more frequent.

Blame Saddam, Abu Sayyaf

"This should be blamed on Saddam Hussein and the Abu Sayyaf," Perez said in a press briefing.

Perez said that Iraq's recent decision to cut oil production contributed to the rise in crude prices and that the Abu Sayyaf's kidnap-for-ransom spree was pushing the peso value downward.

Roda told the INQUIRER that Piston would lobby Congress for the repeal of the law deregulating the oil industry.

He said this year's series of oil price increases showed that the law was useless in protecting the interests of Filipinos, particularly the poor.

Roda said President Macapagal-Arroyo should change the government's policy of deregulation in the oil industry.

Using Malacañang's sobriquet for the President, Roda said "Ate Glo" should push her allies in Congress to repeal the Oil Deregulation Law.

"This is Ate Glo's chance to prove (to us) that she's really pro-poor," he said.

Speaking before some 100 protesters at the Shell building in Makati, Roda said there was no truth to the claims of the country's top three oil firms that they were losing money.

He said the weakening of the peso against the dollar had no effect on oil prices at this time as the oil firms were maintaining a combined 45-day oil inventory.

'Super-profiteering'

Describing Pilipinas Shell's 37-centavo price increase as a classic "super-profiteering through cheating," Bayan asked the President and the 12th Congress to institute measures, including the return of price controls, against the "greed and avarice" of multinational oil firms.

The KMP urged Ms Macapagal to immediately act on what it described as a "calamity" worse than the eruptions of Mayon Volcano.

"This oil cartel-made disaster will further heighten the economic displacement of the Filipino people," KMP secretary general Danilo Ramos said.

Stealth

Bayan secretary general Teodoro Casiño said the government should investigate the "stealthily announced and implemented oil price hike."

He lamented that the Estrada and Macapagal administrations had refrained from investigating the "documented" overpricing, transfer pricing and tax evasion schemes committed by Shell, Caltex and Petron.

Casiño said they had received reports that oil firms make at least P20 billion in profits yearly through overpricing.

In response to intelligence reports that more protest actions are scheduled against the oil firms, the Makati City police force has been placed on alert.

Senior Supt. Jose Gutierrez, Southern Police District Office director, said he placed the Makati City police force on heightened alert to prevent any untoward incident from happening in the country's financial district, where the country's top three oil firms hold their respective main offices.

Petron has an office on Buendia Avenue, Pilipinas Shell on Valero Street and Caltex Philippines on Ayala Avenue.

In Lucena City, a coalition of farmers organization denounced the fuel price increases as "cruel and insensitive" to the plight of the Filipino people.

"Don't they realize that the Filipino people still suffer from expenses brought about by the school opening?" Rene Cerilla, president of Ugnayan ng mga Magsasaka sa Quezon, said. ***With reports from Philip C. Tubeza and Andrea Trinidad-Echavez in Manila and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Soldiers given option to own land in cemetery

BY JULIET L. JAVELLANA

A TOTAL of 224 soldiers' families now have the option to buy the land they are squatting on at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, President Macapagal-Arroyo announced yesterday.

The President said she was saddened that "some elements sensationalized" the plight of the soldiers' families living in a part of the heroes' cemetery, which is declared a national shrine and therefore off-limits to housing.

"I have a special attachment to the Libingan ng mga Bayani. My parents are buried there," she said, pointing out that her mother Evangelina Macapagal also rehabilitated the shrine as part of her civic work as first lady.

"But even then, when my father (Diosdado Macapagal) was President, he (allocated) a part of the Libingan to serve as home lots for soldiers and their families. His proclamation was set aside by his successor (Ferdinand Marcos) and therefore I have reissued the proclamation," she added.

The President thanked Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes for "volunteering to withdraw an eviction order" issued earlier, and which was strongly protested by the families of active soldiers.

She said the proclamation would allow the carving out of a portion of the national shrine for housing the soldiers and their families.

"This proclamation will give the chance for our soldiers living in the designated area to buy the land and therefore be squatters no more," Ms Macapagal said, adding:

"What is more important is the well being of the living soldiers, even as we pay homage to the soldiers who have died, including the departed commanders in chief like my father who are buried in the Libingan ng mga Bayani. I know that my father in his grave will be honored to have living soldiers, not just dead soldiers, as his next-door neighbors."

In her proclamation, the President excluded at least six lots in Taguig from the coverage of Proclamation No. 208 dated May 1967, which established the national shrine and earmarked the prime lots for soldiers' housing.

Baguio club security . . .

(From page A1)

feud pitting his 81-year-old widow Erlinda and three of their six children on one side, and three other children allied with their father on the other.

'Bomb threat'

The BCC security chief refused to give any information about the "bomb threat" even as he rigorously imposed a BCC management directive to bar the INQUIRER from the club's premises.

Supt. Villamor Bumanglag, Baguio police director, assured the INQUIRER that there was no bomb threat at the club, "at least, none that was officially reported to the local police."

Bumanglag said the BCC management had requested the police to help "calm things down" as Ilusorio family members prepared to hold funeral rites for the patriarch today.

Ilusorio's ashes, which had been reportedly taken to the club as early as Sunday, are to be scattered today on the club's golf course.

The INQUIRER learned that the widow and the children allied with her have chosen to remain in Manila to avoid a confrontation with family members hostile to them.

Cancelled mass

A funeral Mass is to be held this morning at the Baguio Cathedral.

A funeral Mass was earlier planned for 10 a.m. yesterday at the St. Joseph Church here, but was cancelled at 9:30 a.m. by a "tall Chinese *mestizo*," a church employee said.

Many Baguio residents and club members said they would stay away from the ceremony, obviously wary that it could end in yet another family scandal.

"The news about the family quarrel disturbs us and we really do not want to be in the middle of this. It has caused the club to become polarized over the issue. Members were expected to take sides and the few who didn't want to were immediately marked out as enemies," said one BCC member who had been invited to attend today's funeral Mass.

The family feud exploded in public two years ago in a series of criminal complaints, counter-charges and custody suits that reached all the way up to the Supreme Court.

Club members are well acquainted with the 1999 civil suit filed by Ilusorio's widow, Erlinda Kalaw-Ilusorio, against her own children for allegedly preventing her from getting access to her husband.

Mrs. Ilusorio and her children Marietta, Shereen and Ramon have accused siblings Sylvia Ilusorio-Yap, Maximo and Ma. Erlinda Ilusorio-Bildner of deliberately concealing the patriarch from his wife.

Family feud

An article which appeared in the INQUIRER's July 1 issue cited Erlinda's autobiography, "On the Edge of Heaven," where the widow said the family squabble was a battle over Ilusorio's fortunes.

Ilusorio's reported assets of P300 million are distributed among his shares in the Baguio Country Club, Fidelity Farms and real estate properties here and in Central Luzon, as well as earnings from blue-chip stocks.

Ilusorio is also said to own shares in the Philippine Overseas Telecommunications Corp. because of his reported closeness to the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

In a Dec. 15, 1999 letter to the INQUIRER Northern Luzon Bureau, Sylvia Ilusorio, Ma. Erlinda Ilusorio-Bildner and Maximo Ilusorio argued that they were simply "protecting (their) father's primordial rights to his life, his liberty and to his property."

"These inherent rights come first and foremost before any conjugal rights (of cohabitation, visitation, and/or even inchoate property rights) can even be considered. We are firm in our resolve to continue following our father's well-meant and oft-expressed wishes to ensure his well-being, dignity and happiness, especially during his remaining years with us," the siblings said.

Not informed

On Saturday, the widow asked the NBI to locate Ilusorio's remains, which had been allegedly kept from her by the children allied with the late Ilusorio.

She apparently had not been informed when her husband died last Thursday.

One of the daughters allied with the mother said they had learned about the death of their father only through intermediaries.

Police sources said the BCC security had been organized for the protection of the Ilusorio widow and her children, Marietta, Shereen and Ramon.

The BCC board's executive committee is currently headed by Sylvia Ilusorio-Yap. The board's president, lawyer Federico Agcaoili, was not available for comment.

Yesterday, every vehicle entering the BCC gates was met by about six armed security people, who proceeded to search car compartments and chassis using a mirror mounted on a long metal stem.

"We're doing this because of a bomb threat. We received it yesterday (Sunday)," a security guard said in Filipino while his colleagues searched the trunk of a taxicab carrying a club guest.

Police officers who were requested to beef up security did not carry a single service firearm.

"We did not expect that we would need them," a policeman said.

The police officers did not also participate in the BCC security checks at the gate.

What the police were advised to watch out for was "unwanted scandal," which the Ilusorio funeral is expected to draw, said PO1 Philip Fines of the Baguio police's Precinct 3.

"Police presence will probably deter any scandal there," he said in Filipino.

Club concerns

But a BCC member said that what everyone is really watching out for is how the Ilusorio siblings will resolve the family feud.

Most club members are seriously concerned about how Ilusorio's shares will be distributed to the siblings, as they are well aware of two other members interested in getting control of one of the country's most exclusive clubs, the source said.

The real bombshell is expected to come in November during the stockholders' meeting and general elections when stockholders elect seven board members.

"That will be the time we can finally tell what Nanoy wrote in his will," the source said.

Mrs. Ilusorio stands to get half of the 216 shares in the club of her late husband who had controlled the BCC shares for nearly three decades, the source said.

Each BCC share is worth P800,000.

German connection

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

IN terms of international exposure, local amateur Latin dance champions Belinda Adora and Bong Marquez pale in comparison to their rivals who have too much experience, skill and talent in world-class competitions.

That is why the Dance Sports Council of the Philippines, headed by tireless Becky Garcia, is leaving nothing to chance by providing Belinda and Bong, the Philippine representatives to the World Games in Akita, Japan, with a German coach who will give them special training for the international dancefest next month.

"We need foreign coaches badly," said Garcia. "It will entail a lot of money to bring them here, but we need their presence in the country."

One of these foreign coaches is renowned German dance coach and adjudicator Wolfgang Opitz. Aside from polishing the skills of Belinda and Bong, Opitz will also head the panel of foreign judges that will adjudicate the DSEP's fifth mid-year ranking and competition for the Alaxan Cup on July 14 at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium. The other judges will come from Hong Kong and Singapore.

Since 1996, the council has made waves in the international dance scene. And the country's coming participation in the World Games in August is proof enough that dancesport in the Philippines has really taken enormous strides when ranged against the other dance organizations which have been in existence for ages.

"We never have anything like this," said a beaming Becky Garcia, who also chairs the education and culture commission of the Philippine Olympic Committee. "We are barely five years old yet we have already competed against the world's leading dancers. And our Latin dancers are now even ranked among the best in Asia."

"At long last, dancesport in the Philippines has come of age," stressed council chair lawyer Noel Laman.

"Furthermore," said council vice president Jun Herrera, "Filipino dance athletes are expected to garner more points in their international campaigns because they now have their own modern training center at the Philsports Arena, courtesy of the Philippine Sports Commission."

Last year, the council staged several nationwide competitions, conducted workshops to upgrade the standard of local techniques and took part in Asian dancefests and international congresses. Local dancesport aficionados also had the good fortune of seeing world champions perform here, such as standard dance professional pair Sacha and Olga Zenkevitch of Russia, pro Latin champions Jukka Haupolainen and Sirpa Suutra of Finland and European Latin standouts Jason Roditis and Tonia Kosovich of Greece. While the celebrated Marcel de Rijk, chair of the Dance Teachers Committee of World Dancers and Dance Sports Council; and Dutch professional Latin champions Ian Waite and Natalia Panima also came and showed their savvy here.

Dacia MBA's Hardcourt Hero

THOUGH he lost to his Fil-Am teammate Raffy Reavis in last year's Rookie of the Year honors, Bruce Dacia has kept the high intensity and latent talent that caught the fancy of MBA fans and die-hard supporters of the reigning National Champion Andok's San Juan Knights.

This 23-year-old high-leaper from Polomolok, South Cotabato, the current leader in the Most Improved Player award derby, is slowly but surely earning recognition as the sixth man in the Knights' roster.

During the Knights' last two wins, the 6-foot-2 off-guard, who was a former player of the University of Visayas Lancers, was instrumental in putting the Knights on top of the team standings with the Negros Slashers. Both have 6-2, win-loss slates.

During the Knights' 137-105 revenge win against Cebuana Lhuillier, Dacia topscored for the defending champions with 25 points. He had 2 rebounds, 3 assists and 1 steal, earning him the MBA Press Corps recognition as Hardcourt Hero of the Week for June 24 to June 29.

And even before their 108-75 conquest of the Gems, Dacia also contributed 20 points, 3 rebounds, 3 assists, 1 block and 2 steals in the Knights' 114-90 win over the Socsargen Marlins.

Dacia is a former teammate of former Cebu local hotshot Dondon Hontiveros in Sunpride at the Cebu Basketball League where he was named as the tournament MVP in 1998.

Knights' assistant coach Allan Borromeo and team owner Sandy Javier spotted him and gave him an offer he could not refuse to play for San Juan last year.

The rest, as the cliché goes, is history.

Much better UP this time, says coach

THE COACH of the University of the Philippines Fighting Maroons has guaranteed he'll have a much better team in the coming UAAP season.

That's because when the 64th edition of the UAAP fires off on July 14 at the Araneta Coliseum, UP will have three things it didn't have last year—more preparation, a legitimate center and the confidence to finish strongly in the endgame.

"I was appointed coach kasi last year, mga two weeks before the start of the actual tournament, so obviously we didn't have the kind of preparation we had like this year," said coach Ryan Gregorio, whose wards finished tied for sixth in last year's tourney with a 4-10 slate.

The youthful UP mentor, who also acts as Eric Altamirano's assistant at Purefoods in the PBA, said lack of preparation was the cause of their failure to perform well in the endgames.

For the record, 6 of the Maroons' 10 defeats last season were by 4 points or less. Four of those six defeats came against three of the teams that made it to the Final Four.

Learning from those lessons, UP has embarked on a mission to improve on their skills and gain more experience during this year's pre-season.

UP finished second to MLQU in the Philippine Youth Basketball League. It landed third in their bracket in the Fr. Martin's Cup, where they beat the tournament's Top 2 teams—FEU and San Sebastian.

"With the kind of preparation we had, hopefully by the time the actual tournament starts, meron na kaming confidence to win games especially in the endgame," said Gregorio, adding a semifinal slot for UP could be a possibility this year.

"The Final Four is always a dream," said Gregorio. "I think that's attainable with the kind of confidence we built during the preseason. Nag-mature na ang laro ng karamihan ng players. And actually ang isang kulang lang talaga namin last year, iyong inside presence."

Gregorio said the acquisition of 6-foot-4 Kenneth Robin, a recruit from Don Bosco in Cebu, filled the void at the paint.

Also expected to play key roles for UP are Patrick Madarang, who is back on the roster to finish off his UAAP career hopefully in style, Mike Bravo, Robson Bornancin, Mark Jomalesa and Xavier Nunag.

The other players on the Maroons' lineup are Vicente Arnaiz, Jr., Toti Almeda, Jireh Ibañez, Bruce Quebral, Alberto Guidaben Jr., Josant Cervantes, Rodel Celo, Abby Santos, Rebullida Jr. and their only rookie, Gino Ferrer.

WIMBLEDON ACTION
Lindsay Davenport of the United States returns a shot to Switzerland's Patty Schnyder during their singles match on the No. 1 court at Wimbledon. Davenport won, 6-2, 6-3. Action resumes today in the world's most prestigious tennis tournament. AP

Fil-American Friendship run to kick off MJC festival races

THE MANILA Jockey Club, the country's premier race club, unveiled yesterday one of its biggest racing projects for the year with the launching of the inaugural Fil-American Friendship Racing Festival starting tomorrow at the San Lazaro Hippodrome.

Bolstered by its recent record streak, capped by an all-time single day record gross on Gran Copa Day, MJC aims to preserve its momentum with another explosive 5-day parade of stakes and special races culminating in the "Horseman's Cup," the third and final leg of the Philippine Triple Crown series.

"As we have long promised our loyal patrons and industry-partners, we would like to underscore that MJC is seriously committed to promote the accelerated growth and development of the local horse racing industry until it has reached its true potential," said MJCI president, lawyer Alfonso R. Reyno Jr. in yesterday's press conference at the MJC Turf Room.

An impressive parade of seven (7) top money races and a slew of Special Races will be on tap for the duration of the five-day racefest.

"The holding of the 1st Fil-Am Friendship racefest is certainly an opportune occasion for us to recall the valuable contribution of our American allies in popularizing the sport of horse racing at the turn of the century by democratizing horse ownership and by allowing public betting in the sport," Reyno noted.

Headlining the week-long festivities is the running of the Philracom "Horseman's Cup," the final leg of the local Triple Crown championship, which has gained an interesting twist following the recent loss of heavy favorite Silver Story in a regular race last Sunday.

The celebrated grey galloper who is just a win away from achieving the elusive Triple Crown sweep suffered a shocking defeat against an unheralded rival in a development that has put the outcome of the coveted series finale in total disarray.

Prominent Filipino horseman, Don Antonio O. Floirendo, will be the cup honoree this year in tribute to his valuable contribution to the growth of the sport for more than 50 years.

Lending support to the P1.67-million championship showdown would be the running of the P300,000-guaranteed Philracom Challenge Stakes Race involving some of the major contenders in the recent Philracom Cup-Division II of the Gran Copa de Manila.

Cameroon qualifies

YAOUNDE, Cameroon — Cameroon and South Africa became the first nations in qualifying to earn berths in next year's World Cup, and four-time champion Brazil stumbled again, losing 1-0 in Uruguay. The United States, meanwhile, lost 1-0 in Mexico on Sunday, its first defeat in six games in the final round of the North and Central American and Caribbean region. The Americans (4-1-1) dropped out of first place behind Costa Rica (4-1-1), which won 3-2 at third-place Honduras (2-2-2). Mauricio Solis scored the go-ahead goal in the 82nd minute at Tegucigalpa. The top three nations qualify in the CONCACAF region.

SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

TENNIS: Wimbledon, Day 7 Highlights at 8 a.m. (r – 8 p.m.), Day 7, Round of 16 at 12 noon (r), Day 8 Singles Quarter Finals at 9 p.m. on Star Sports
ATP Tennis Show at 7 p.m. (r) on ESPN
GOLF: PGA Canon Greater Hartford, Second Round at 9 a.m. (r) on Star Sports
U.S. Senior Open, Final Round at 1 p.m. (r) on ESPN
LPGA Shoprite Classic, First Round at 11 p.m. on ESPN
BASKETBALL: WNBA - Detroit Shock vs New York Liberty at 8 a.m. (r – 9 p.m.) on ESPN

RP Embassy joins German cagefest

THE BONES & Bears team of the Philippine embassy in Germany participated in the 3rd Filipino Catholic Community Basketball Tournament held in Essen, Germany, last month.

Coached by Ambassador Jose Abeto Zaide, Bones & Bears dumped the Wild Wings, 40-13, but bowed to the Caviteños, 39-24.

Members of Bones & Bears, which returned to Berlin with two trophies, including one for the most disciplined team, were Ambassador Zaide, consul general Joey Jimeno, consuls Solphie Confiado and Gary Auxilian, protocol office Ronnie Villanueva, Jamil Zaide, Moli Morales, Eric Rubas, Jimmy Jimeno, Andre Confiado, Ron Carl Morales, Jimbo Paclibar and Rey de la Paz.

The team's muses were Ruthie Mae Patricio and Ann Monique Villanueva, while honorary consul Manfred Schnell and Heinz van Opstal were team managers. ABS-CBN Europe, through SVP and managing director Remigio David, provided the team's uniform.

Fathers Dietmar Weber and Manny Tamayo were the prime movers of the FCC league, which brought together Filipino community organizations from all over North Rhine Westphalia.

Alcantara faces Chio for Milo netfest crown

VALENCIA, Bukidnon—Francis Casey Alcantara of Cagayan de Oro ousted Teofilo Salomon, 6-4, 6-2, and will meet Inatao's Bobby Chio, a 6-4, 6-2 winner over Jopy Mamawal for the boys' 12-under division crown in the 2001 Milo Junior Tennis Cup & Regional Workshop here.

Alcantara guns for a rare double when the Grade 3 Xavier student tangles with Darwin Realista of Butuan, who edged Robert Ortellano, 6-3, 7-5, in the unisex 10-under bracket.

In the girls 12-under class, Jecille Ortellano routed Nikki de Dios, 6-1, 6-1, to barge into the final against Anafil Salomon in the Milo netfest organized by the CTW and supported by Adidas and Sports Kids.

Duma Boloto likewise goes for two championship trophies when the Marawi netter meets Jessie Gorillo in the boys' 16-under division, and then takes on Kevin Realista in the boys' 14-under group. Ara Micayabas measures Grace Ann Nibalvos for the girls' 14-under class jewel.

MICKELSON: Finally, a winner again. AP

SPORTSWATCH

Cordova, others inducted

THE PHILIPPINE Sportsmen Society held its induction of officers and directors in Quezon City recently with Senior Police Supt. Ernesto Belen as speaker and inducting officer. Executive Secretary Renato Corona delivered the main address. Inducted were Rep. Jack Enrile as board chair, Ray Cordova (president), Dr. Cesar Guzman (vice president), Hermy Herrera (treasurer), Arnel Dimaano (secretary) and Danny de la Paz of Armscor (pro). Composing the board of directors are Ed Fernandez, A. Acuna, Lex Gregorio, B. Manual, F. de Guzman, Fr. G. Ramo, Dr. G. Mejia, E. Dalican, C. Feri and Ruben Manuel.

NCFP chessfest

THE NCFP Non-Master (Quezon City) Active Chess Championship comes off the wraps on July 8, 9:30 a.m., at Egel's Sizzling House, 22 Matalino St., (beside Allied Bank, at the back of QC Hall), Diliman, Quezon City. Organized by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines (NCFP), the one-day chess event is open to all untitled players, rated or unrated. It offers a total cash prize of P10,000 with the champion winning P4,000. Interested participants can inquire at the NCFP offices at tels. 435-1114 or 435-1113.

Javelin record

ATHENS, Greece—Cuba's Osleidys Menendez set a new world record in the women's javelin Sunday with a throw of 71.54 meters in the one-day Vardinoyiannia athletics meet held on the Greek island of Crete. Menendez bettered the mark of 69.48 meters held by Norway's Trine Solberg-Hallestad since July 28, 2000. Solberg-Hallestad is an Olympic and two-time world champion. The record was set during the meet in the port city of Rethimnon, an annual event held in memory of Pavlos Vardinoyannis, a member of the Vardinoyiannis shipping family. *AP*

No final-round collapse for Mickelson at Hartford

CROMWELL, Connecticut — Phil Mickelson overcame his history of final-round collapses, shooting a 2-under-par 68 Sunday for a one-stroke victory over Billy Andrade in the Greater Hartford Open.

Booming long drives and staying out of trouble most of the day, Mickelson finished at 16-under 264.

He earned $558,000 for his 19th career victory to push his season total to $3,569,724, second behind Tiger Woods. He also has three runner-up finishes and four thirds this year.

He began the round with a one-stroke lead over David Berganio Jr., after shooting a 61 on Saturday _ tying the course record and two strokes better than his previous tour best.

King, 45, wins

ABSECON, New Jersey —Betsy King proved at the ShopRite LPGA Classic that golfers in their 40s can still compete against players half their age. King, 45, became the third American to win an LPGA event this year, shooting a 4-under-par 67 for a 201 total. The other American winners were in their 40s, too: Juli Inskter, 41, and Rosie Jones, 40.

Montgomerie prevails

CORK, Ireland —Colin Montgomerie is not only back to winning, he also predicts the winning score. Accurately. After his opening 8-under-par course record 63 in the Irish Open on Thursday, Montgomerie predicted the winning total would be twice 8-under plus two—and so it proved. Sunday, Montgomerie scored his first European Tour victory in 57 weeks, shooting a final round 66 to finish 18-under-par on 266.

Fleisher seniors champ

PEABODY, Massachusetts —A year after losing a final-round lead to a red-hot rival, Bruce Fleisher won the U.S. Senior Open by a stroke Sunday for his first major title as Jack Nicklaus and other challengers fell off the pace. *AP*

Bulljack derby today

THE MUCH-AWAITED Bulljack 4-Cock Derby will be held today at the Roligon Mega Cockpit in Parañaque City.

Hosted by Bulljack, one of the best known breeders and conditioners in the country, this derby will be participated in by the members of Ucap, Pasay Group and the Araneta Group.

Art Lopez of Bacolod, Louie Kua, Ruel Ricafort, lawyer Rudy Salud, lawyer Santos, Lito Orillosa, William Go and others also confirmed their participation in this exciting battle of feathered warriors.

HOW DO YOU GIVE EVEN BRAND-NEW CARS--
THE BRIGHTEST, LONGEST-LASTING SHINE EVER?
PLUS STRONGER PAINT PROTECTION!
(GOOD ON ALL CARS! EVEN IF "NOT-SO-BRAND-NEW" ANYMORE.)
Zipbom DIAMOND GLOSS

Epson lady booters prevail

DAVAO CITY—Epson-Davao City smashed Ject Manpower-Davao B, 5-1, Sunday to handily retain the Rexona National Women's football crown at the packed Kapitan Tomas Monteverde Sports Complex here. Top striker Leonor Satorre scored two goals to raise her tally to 11 markers as the Ink Jet booters capped their campaign in the Rexona-sponsored tourney organized by the Philippine Football Federation without dropping a single match.

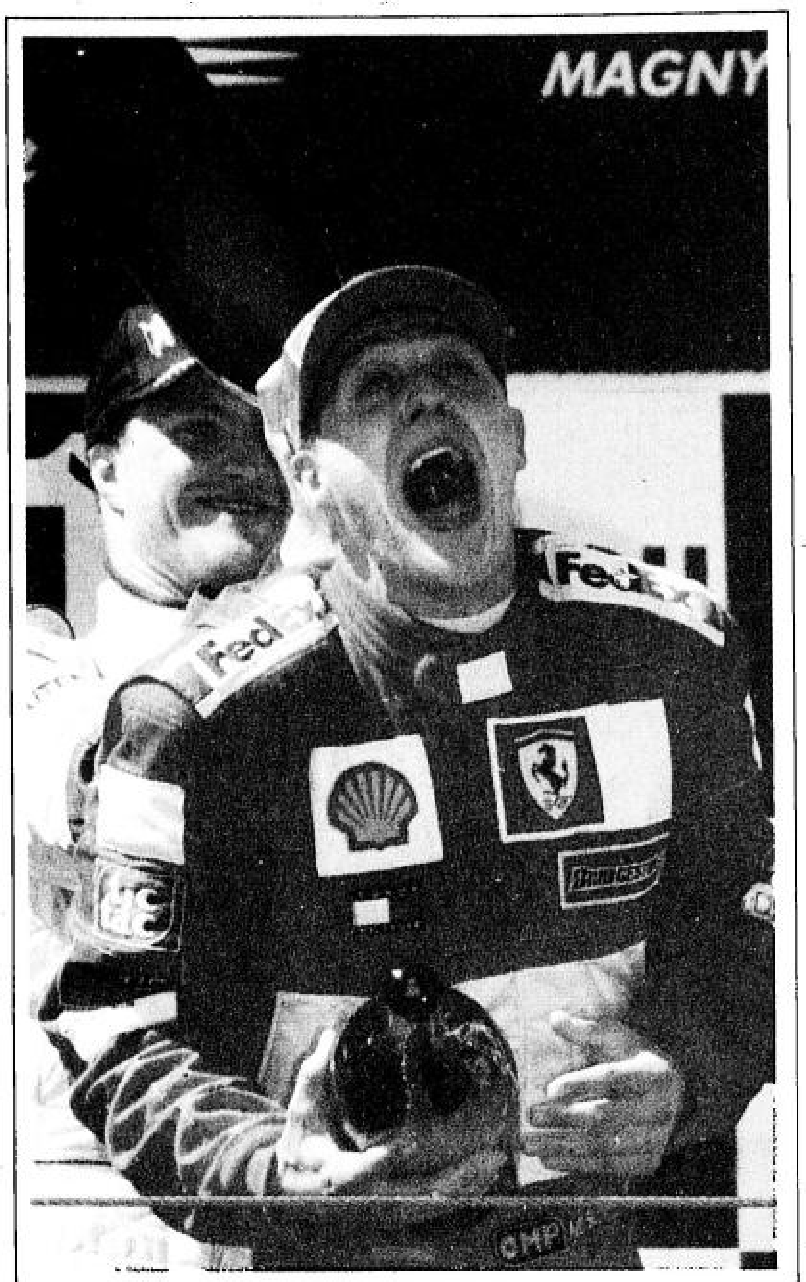
SPORTS
AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ■ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

Pro racer dies in accident

PERRIS, California — Professional motorcycle racer Robert Damron died in a collision while racing at the Perris Auto Speedway. He was 36. The accident happened Saturday during the first lap of the West Coast Flat Track Series when he collided with two other riders, according to the Riverside Press-Enterprise. Damron was thrown from his motorcycle and hit by oncoming bikes racing at speeds of more than 100 mph (160.9 kph). *AP*

NEGOTIATIONS

PSC offers help to BAP row



AP

CHAMPAGNE SPLASH

Ralf Schumacher (left) pours champagne on brother Michael after the latter won the French Grand Prix in Magny-Cours, central France, Sunday. Aside from spoiling Ralf's 26th birthday celebration, Michael, 32, also collected the kind of present most F1 drivers can only dream of—a tally of 50 race victories.

BY JUNE NAVARRO

THE PHILIPPINE Sports Commission yesterday offered its help to end the leadership crisis besetting the Basketball Association of the Philippines.

In a press statement, PSC Chair Carlos Tuason said the PSC would spearhead the negotiations between feuding basketball personalities Quinteliano Literal and Gonzalo Puyat II.

He added that while there is a growing perception on government intervention on the PSC's offer, the PSC would still join hands with the POC in resolving the issue to save the country's sagging image in the international sports scene.

Puyat, who agreed to a harmonious meeting with Literal, earlier said he would only sit down on the bargaining table once Tuason excuses himself from the negotiations.

Tuason's presence, Puyat insisted, is tantamount to government intervention.

"I firmly believe that this problem must be solved by basketball people only," said Puyat, who requested Mobiline team owner Manny Pangilinan to act as arbiter in the proposed conciliatory meeting.

The meeting was supposed to be held yesterday but Literal was reportedly out of town.

Meanwhile, the Philippine Olympic Committee set no conditions on the conciliatory move between Puyat and Literal to fast-track the lifting of the Fiba suspension.

"There are no preconditions. As long as they sign an accord with my signature it will be enough to lift the suspension," Dayrit told the INQUIRER.

He added: "The POC is ready to accept any arrangement that may be mutually agreed upon by the two groups."

Dayrit was referring to the first of two options being offered by the Fiba for the BAP to regain its membership from the world governing body in the sport.

The Fiba instructed that conflicting parties (Literal and Puyat) should sign a conciliatory letter with the signature of Dayrit affixed and then forward the statement to the Switzerland-based basketball body.

"With the SEA Games fast approaching, they (Puyat and Literal) should act on it immediately," said Dayrit. "What is important now is for the two contending parties to agree to an arrangement that will pave the way for our basketball athletes to compete in the SEA Games."

Dayrit noted the suspension should be lifted before the final submission of entry forms on July 15 for the country to defend its crown in the biennial sportsfest set in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on Sept. 8-17.

Tuason: PSC gesture made for the interest of the country

TUASON

HIS EFFORTS at trying to help solve the conflict in the Basketball Association of the Philippines misinterpreted as government intervention, Philippine Sports Commission chair Butch Tuason said yesterday that the offer was made "for the good and interest of the country."

"The PSC would like to broker peace discussions with the end view of helping both parties come to an agreement," said Tuason. "This offer, we believe, is purely for the good and interest of the country whose image in the foreign scene continues to suffer even without this conflict."

Gonzalo "Lito" Puyat, who is locked in a bitter fight for the BAP presidency with Quinteliano "Tiny" Literal, has opposed the role of Tuason as a possible mediator to the squabble.

At the same time, Tuason stressed the crucial role of the PSC outside financial matters related to the training of the country's national athletes and sports development.

"It is also the duty of the PSC, being the highest government authority on amateur sports, to protect the interest of the national government," he said.

Tuason also said that the BAP conflict must be resolved before the deadline set by the Fiba for the country's participation in the Southeast Asian Games on July 15.

Should the suspension stay up to the deadline set, the Philippine will face the prospect of having to compete in the SEA Games without a basketball team for the first time since the sport was introduced in the biennial games.

"The scenario of our non-participation in the SEA Games would jeopardize everything we've worked so hard for the past years," said Tuason. "We are one with the nation in hoping for the quick resolution of this problem in the BAP."

8 teams joining Espiritu Cup

EIGHT teams have so far confirmed their participation in the NBC-3rd Danny Espiritu Cup basketball tournament starting on Saturday, July 7, at the Makati Coliseum.

These teams, together with their owners/supporters, are:

University of Manila (lawyer Ernesto delos Santos), Wangs Ball Club (Alex Wang), Philippine Army (Lt. Gen. Jaime delos Santos), Spring Cooking Oil (Tac Padilla), Hub Café Internet (Rey Pamaran), G.P. Maryson (George Palaran), Mapsa (Mayor Jejomar Binay, Vice Mayor Ernesto Mercado and Director Hermie San Miguel) and PCCr (Dr. Eduardo J. Bautista and lawter Florante M. Seril).

A pre-opening and managers' meeting will be held at 5 p.m. on July 5 at Wild Duck Restaurant along Roxas Boulevard. Other interested teams are invited to attend. For more details, they may nNo. 743-0810), Angelo Penaranda (tel. nos. 851-3109/851-3110) or tournament commissioner Mar Morelos (0917-9351510).

Confirmation

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

WINNING the Philippne Open Golf Championship is every Filipino golfer's dream.

Caloy Nival, in his 60s, still rues to this day his failure to win the Open in 1969, when he lost it to Japan's Haruo Yasuda in a playoff.

For years, Frankie Miñoza suffered as the best Filipino golfer never to have won the Open. When he finally nailed it in 1998 at Riviera, he said: *"Para akong nabunutan ng tinik."*

Rudy Labares won in 1984 and Mario Manubay in 1986, when foreigners weren't around. Same with Gerald Rosales when he prevailed last year at Riviera.

But the Open will always be the Open. Its prestige has never waned, whether there's a foreigner competing or not.

Fifty-six men have won the Open since it began in 1913 at the now-extinct Manila Golf Club in Malabon.

The first 16 Opens were won by Americans. Filipino Larry Montes ended American domination when he captured it in 1929. Montes, who died a while back in California, would score 11 more victories—the last in 1954—to become the winningest with 12. Celestino Tugot, who is still very much around, followed with 6, including four straight from 1955. Ben Arda has 3 (1961, 1963 and 1979). Luis "Golem" Silverio (1966), Quintin Mancao (1976) and Robert Pactolerin (1990) have one apiece.

Winning the Open is one of the hardest to achieve. In more than 80 editions of the Open, only 13 Filipinos have won it. Happily for us, the last Open was won by a Filipino—Cassius Casas. Just last Sunday.

Oh, yes, Casas.

Once regarded as Miñoza's heir apparent, Casas waited 9 years as a pro before he could pocket the Open. To do it, he had to reconstruct his backswing flawed by a flying elbow 2 months before the Open, thanks to Bong Lopez. After opening up with a 2-under-par 70 at Wack Wack, Bong knew his reconstruction job had worked.

"I knew at once he'd win," said Bong, a national team member many times over before becoming a national team coach.

Three more sub-par rounds (70-71-70) confirmed Bong's prediction as Casas went on to score a 5-shot victory worth P1.5 million, his biggest paycheck since he turned pro in 1992.

Casas changing his swing is no big deal, really.

Nick Faldo, after winning 2 US Masters titles, changed his swing.

Tiger Woods, after winning the 1997 US Masters, also changed his swing.

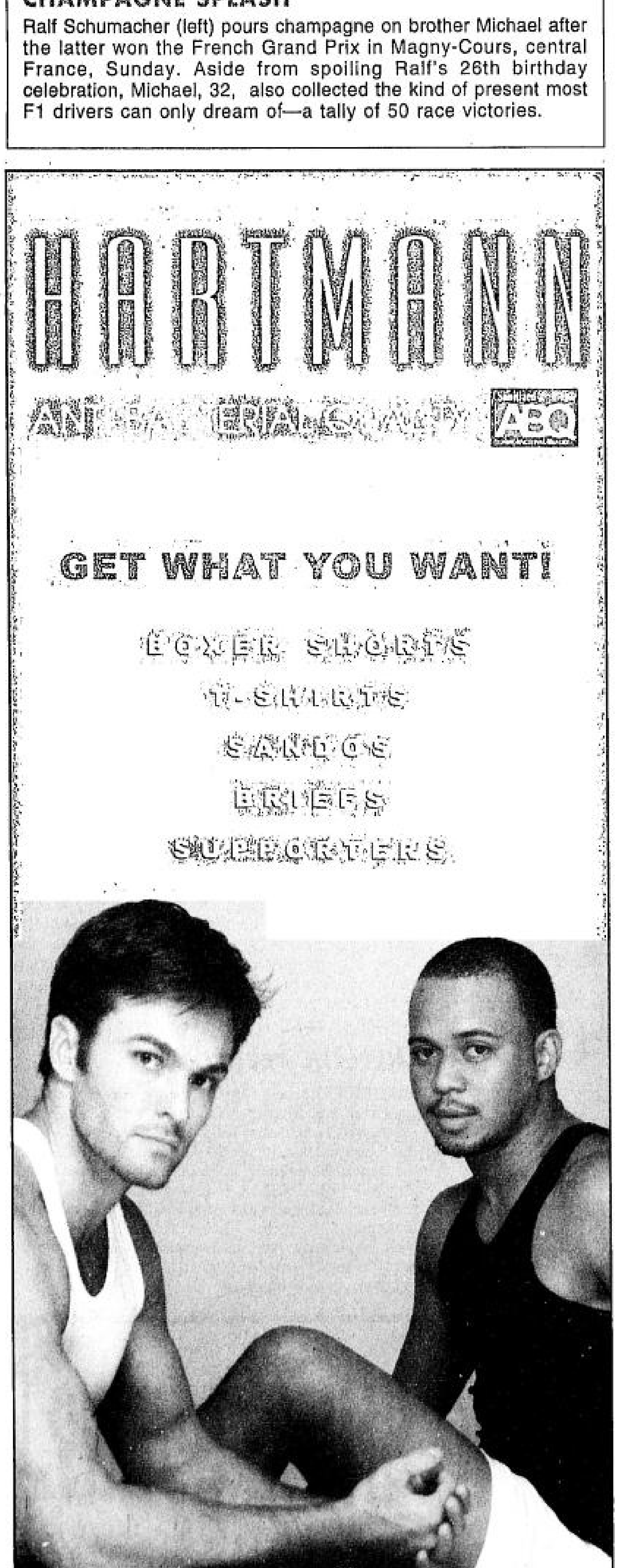
But while Faldo never recovered his winning touch, Woods went on to win the big ones, including all 4 majors of golf in succession. He is now world No. 1.

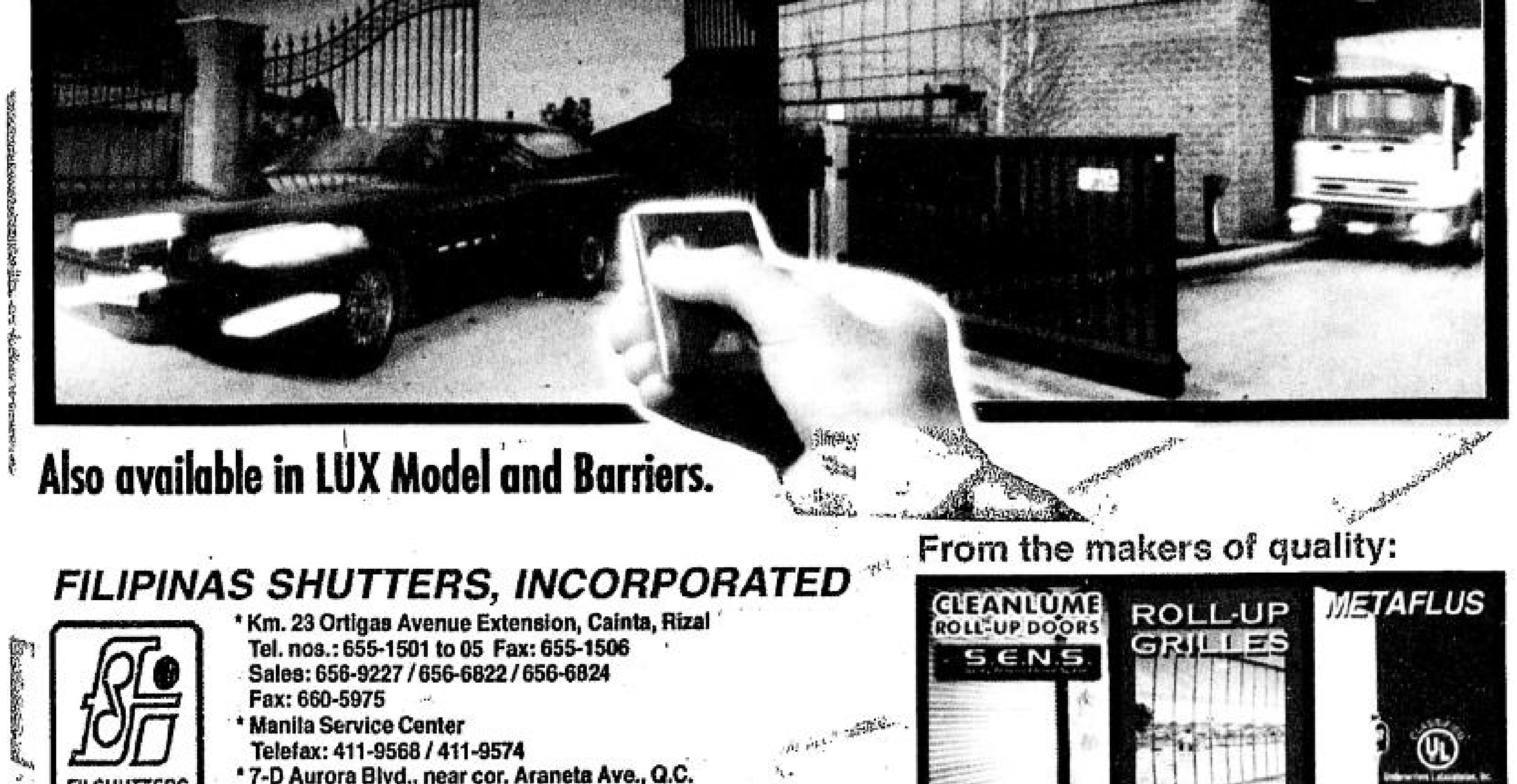
Casas, 34, will next play in Taiwan. I hope his restructured swing holds. Winning the Open is just the start. He needs to confirm the potency of his new-found formula. Taiwan should provide it.

Good luck, *Pareng* Cas.

***

JAKE Ayson, the NGAP executive director, has yet to receive his golf set (Mizuno Astron packed in a Grand Monarch bag), which was accidentally loaded by his caddy in a different car at Wack Wack during the Open Week last week. He can be reached at 525-6987 or 524-5160.





METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

■ QC jail warden relieved over suspect's escape A20

■ 'Poor' want OIC Malonzo out A20

Schools relax ROTC rules

TAKING his turn as mayor of San Juan, JV Ejercito is joined by his mother, Guia Gomez, in the inauguration Mass at the town hall.

EDWIN BACASMAS

By CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

AS CALLS for the abolition of the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) grow louder, cadet officers have become softer in exerting their authority over the trainees.

School officials have reportedly also relaxed their rules after students and cadets boycotted the ROTC training sessions the past two Sundays following a series of protest actions against the military training institution.

"Officers do not harass cadets anymore," said Janssen Dangzalan, 19, a cadet of the University of Sto. Tomas. "They're more accommodating now."

ROTC officers are traditionally known to abuse their authority, punishing cadets for the slightest infractions.

But since the boycotts started, the officers have become very friendly, Dangzalan said.

The clamor for the abolition of the ROTC began after one of its officers, UST Engineering student Mark Welson Chua, was kidnapped and murdered following his exposure of anomalies in the school's military training program.

Chua's body was found wrapped in a carpet and floating in the Pasig River on March 19. His face was also wrapped with packing tape, and his hands and feet were bound.

Another cadet, Christopher Daguimol, said officers seemed to have been "intimidated" by cadets since the unprecedented walkout on Sunday.

A cocky officer berated a cadet for laughing while he was giving orders to a platoon, Daguimol narrated.

When the cadet answered, "It's none of your business," the officer tried to assert his authority by confiscating the student's identification card, Daguimol said.

He said the cadet refused to surrender his ID and asked the officer to give him a demerit instead, "if he could do that."

The officer, Daguimol said, was embarrassed and simply walked away.

Such an instance was highly unlikely before the protest actions against the ROTC, Daguimol said.

Cadets who commit mistakes are often asked to do push-ups or drops. Officers also normally mock them in front of other cadets.

But the tables were turned last Sunday. Students, cadets, and militant groups managed to take over the stage at the UST to urge everybody to join the ROTC boycott. Officers who went on stage during last Sunday's training were booed, said cadet Frederick Bunag.

As a sign of protest, some of the cadets have dyed or streaked their hair, which was not allowed before.

Homosexual cadets have also dropped their pretense at manliness without fear of reprimand from their officers.

But Bunag pointed out that these things were not meant to sow chaos during training. He said they only want to drum up the campaign for the abolition of the ROTC.

Earlier, cadets have launched a signature drive in colleges and universities nationwide to urge Congress to pass a bill abolishing the student military training program.

They vowed to boycott their Sunday training until the abolition is carried out.

JV: Who knows, I might be President

By AGNES DONATO

THIS EARLY, newly installed San Juan Mayor Joseph Victor Ejercito has made clear where he hopes to wind up his political career—in Malacañang like his father, deposed President Joseph Estrada.

Taking his oath again, this time at the San Juan town hall, Ejercito noted the parallelisms between his own oath-taking and that of his father's in 1969.

"Not so long ago, I was still in my mother's womb then, my father was elected San Juan mayor," Ejercito said in his inaugural speech yesterday. "Now, three decades later, it is my turn to serve our historic town.

"Who knows? I might just attain someday what my father has reached. I have always hoped to serve not only the people of San Juan but the Filipino masses."

Ejercito, who was named after his father and for being the so-called "victory baby" of his parents, was sworn into office by Justice Andres Reyes Jr., whose father in turn swore in the former president also as San Juan mayor.

Yesterday, Ejercito was accompanied by his mother, former starlet Guia Gomez, half-brother Jojo Ejercito and other relatives when he was sworn in before some 300 municipal hall employees and supporters.

Municipal treasurer Belen Martinez led the symbolic turnover of municipal funds of P270 million.

Ejercito first took his oath of office on Saturday at the Veteran's Memorial Medical Center, where his half-brother, former San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, and their father are detained on plunder charges.

The former First Lady and now Senator Luisa Ejercito also took her oath at the VMMC on Saturday.

"I find the ceremonies on Saturday to be more significant because my whole family was there," Ejercito said. "While I feel sad my father was not able to see me take my oath here, I think this is for the better. Their (Joseph and Jinggoy Estrada) presence here might only cause security risks."

Three more flyovers for Metro

By GERALD G. LACUARTA

THE DEPARTMENT of Public Works and Highways yesterday said it is planning to build four more interchanges—three flyovers and an underpass—in Metro Manila to ease traffic.

One of the proposed flyovers would be built over the intersection of Espana and Gov. Forbes beside the University of Sto. Tomas in Sampaloc, Manila.

Lope Adriano, director of the DPWH-Urban Roads Project Office-Project Management Office, said the 650-meter, P450-million flyover along Gov. Forbes would be constructed above the proposed Metro Rail Transit Line 4.

The three other proposed interchanges would be on C-3 (G. Araneta Avenue)/R-7 (Quezon Avenue), C3 (G. Araneta)/E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, and C-3 (Sgt. Rivera Street/A. Bonifacio Avenue).

Adriano said the detailed engineering for the four projects will be included in the proposed loan agreement with the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) under Phase V of the Metro Manila Interchange Construction Project.

Costing P320 million, the C-3 (G. Araneta)/R-7 (Quezon Avenue) interchange project would involve the construction of a four-lane divided underpass along C-3 Road/Quezon Avenue with an approximate length of 750 meters.

The 650-meter, P380-million C3 (G. Araneta Avenue)/E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue) interchange would be a four-lane divided second level flyover expected to be built within 24 months.

Also expected to rise along C-3 Road is a 600-meter long four-lane divided second level flyover costing P380 million that will cross A. Bonifacio Avenue, a main gateway to the North Luzon Expressway.

Currently under construction is the P393.83 million Edsa-Quezon Avenue interchange which is a three-lane viaduct along Edsa.

The Edsa-Quezon Avenue interchange started in January under a joint venture contract with William Uy Construction Corp., JH Pajara Construction Corp, and Philippine National Construction Corp.

Adriano said the project is expected to be completed in the second quarter of 2002.

Wazzzzup?

8th day Bar • Café, St. Francis Sq. Ortigas Ctr.	FREESTYLE	WISEGUYZ JULY 4/634.7696
AudioTorium, 21 West Ave., Quezon City	SOUL'D OUT	374.2330/373.5574
Bogota World Music Bar & Restaurant, 574 Pedro Gil St., Malate	BIG DEAL JULY 4, WEDNESDAY	P300 CONSUMABLE 524.9245/525.5276
BUMA, 9395 Kamagong St. Makati	X-PROJECT	P35 BEER 896.2116/896.1939
Café Overdrive, Ford Bldg., P. Tamo Ext., Makati	TERESA GARCIA (ACOUSTIC)	FREE ENTRANCE 818.5555/813.1348
Cowboy Grill, Brgy. Almanza, Las Piñas	GOALKEYS KOOL JACKS	NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎801.7644
Cowboy Grill, 1190 Arqueza St., Mabini	MUSIC CIRCUIT STAY TUNED/CITY BORN	NO ENTRANCE FEE 525.1474/525.4269
Cowboy Grill, 431 Remedios St., Malate	SERSIDE PUZZLES	NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎521.8143
Cowboy Grill, Novaliches Q.C.	HOMOSAPIENS HIMIG	NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎936.9757
KAMPO 2088, #47 West Avenue Q.C.	BLAKDYAK R.O.B/HEAT OF D' NIGHT	P200 CONSUMABLE 373.5110/373.7181
Examiner's Lite n' Live, #52 Examiner St. Q.C.	MERMAIDS MICHELLE & NORIE	P150 CONSUMABLE 373.2221/373.7183
Music Warehouse, Infront of Central Market	7 SECONDS NEW LEVEL	NO ENTRANCE FEE 735.1280/735.1405
Partyplace, San Fernando, Pampanga	ROCK NYT	PAROKYA NI EDGAR JULY 7, SATURDAY
Tia Maria's, Remedios cor. Carolina	BLIZZARD MIX JAM	NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎522.0429
Tropical Forest Café-Grill-Restaurant, Tukalaw Luneta, Manila	VOLUME 3	LUNCH SPECIAL P250/400.3478

TUESDAY, JULY 03 912-8983

MSD HEALTH NEWS

For many men, hair loss is such a sensitive subject it can only be addressed by someone close, someone he trusts completely. So here are some guide to help you discuss his options with him. Your support may be just what he needs to see his doctor and seek the treatment he already wants.

Facts about male pattern hair loss (MPHL)

In males, thinning of hair may begin at any time after puberty and is not unusual by the late teens. The incidence of baldness increases with age as studied. As a rule of thumb 25% of men aged 25, 40% of men aged 40, and 50% of men aged 50 show evidence of MPHL.[1]

The two components of male pattern baldness are bitemporal recession and balding over the vertex (top of the head). Usually the balding starts in the temples and frontal areas and involves the posterior vertex later; occasionally the whole crown is affected by the thinning process from the start. The hair loss process may be gradual and continuous, but is often episodic. As the condition progresses, more of the vertex is involved by the balding process and in the most extreme cases complete balding of the crown can result, with hair remaining only on the back and sides of the scalp.[1]

Help Your Partner Deal With **Hair Loss**

How you can help

MPHL is such a sensitive subject, many men try to ignore or deny it as long as possible. For some, it is so traumatic it can shake their confidence and undermine their self-esteem, even cause them to question their masculinity. For others, it is a signal of lost youth.

But just because your partner does not talk about MPHL, does not mean it does not bother him. Many men are embarrassed to consult a doctor for fear of seeming vain.

That is why your support is so critical. Your partner trusts you, respects your opinion, and knows you have his best interests at heart. Your encouragement could help him get the successful treatment that can improve his outlook, and yours too.

Five steps to helping him deal with his hair loss

1. **Understand MPHL**. The more you understand about this medical condition, the easier it will be to help him.
2. **Educate**. Explain MPHL and that he can see a doctor about medical treatment options.
3. **Empathize**. He might be experiencing a loss that goes beyond the loss of his hair. Try to understand what he may be feeling and be there to support him.

4. **Reassure**. Help him understand that it is his choice to seek treatment and that you are 100% behind him. You can encourage him to seek medical advice.
5. **Enable**. If he does not have a regular doctor, give him the name and phone number of a doctor who can advise him.

Facts about medical treatment for MPHL

Because MPHL is a medical condition, there are available medical treatment options for it. Traditional hair loss treatment options range from hair augmentation and replacement, such as hair weaves and toupees, to topical products which are applied to the scalp. Other used remedies to replace hair loss are hair implants or transplants. Today, there is also an oral prescription medicine that has been clinically tested and approved by the US Food and Drug Administration/Philippine Bureau of Food and Drug to stop MPHL and help increase hair growth. Ask your doctor about it.

It is up to you to take the first step

Now that you have the facts, take the first step. Talk to him. Hundreds of thousands of women have already helped their partners find the solution to hair loss. Encourage him to see his doctor or see a dermatologist and begin treatment. Chances are, he has just been waiting for a signal from you. It is a conversation that could make him feel better about himself.

1. Whiting DA, Howsden FL. Androgenetic Alopecia. Color atlas of differential diagnosis of hair loss. Cedar Grove, NJ: Canfield Publishing, 1996: 18-23.

For more information about MPHL, consult a dermatologist or your physician. For other concerns, you may call MSD Customer Call Center at 878-6338. For outside Metro Manila, call (toll-free) 1-800-1-888-6737.

MSD
MERCK SHARP & DOHME PHILIPPINES
26/F Philamlife Tower
8767 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City

'Poor' want OIC Malonzo out

'Asistios paying protesters'

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

HUNDREDS of poor residents of Caloocan City yesterday staged a rally in front of the city hall to pressure President Macapagal-Arroyo into revoking Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo's appointment on Saturday as OIC mayor of the city.

Calling Malonzo an "enemy of the poor," the protesters, led by the 1,500-strong Puwersa ng Walang Wala, said they would organize a massive protest action similar to the so-called Edsa 3 to force Ms Macapagal to reconsider Malonzo's appointment. They also vowed to stay in front of the city hall until Malacañang appoints a new set of OICs.

Malonzo said he was only giving the protesters a chance to cool off and for their emotion to subside.

"Then, we would ask them to leave, especially if they are getting in the way (of official business)," Malonzo said.

He also described the protesters as paid lackeys of his rivals, brothers Macario "Boy" Asistio Jr. and Rep. Luis "Baby" Asistio. He said the protesters are receiving P200 a day from the Asistios.

"They (the Asistios) should accept their defeat. They should know that those appointed OIC's have the people's mandate," Malonzo said.

The Commission on Elections has suspended the proclamation of winning candidates pending its decision on a petition for an election failure filed by the Asistios.

Yolanda Crisostomo, spokesperson of PnWW, claimed that the letter appointing Malonzo and other "winning" candidates as OICs could have been faked. She said the letter only had the initials of Ms Macapagal and not her signature.

"We appeal to the President to appoint a new OIC, anybody but Malonzo and his partymates," Crisostomo said.

"The people of Caloocan know very well that Malonzo has made their lives more miserable so he doesn't deserve to be mayor all over again."

She challenged Malonzo to stand in front of the protesters and tell them that he deserves to be the OIC.

Protesters denounced the mayor for his alleged "sins" to the poor.

As early as 8 a.m. yesterday, protesters camped out at the plaza in front of the city hall and staged a program calling for Malonzo's replacement.

Then they marched on the streets urging other poor residents to join their cause.

Some of the protesters accused the media of being biased in favor of Malonzo.

Malacañang has been silent since Malonzo's controversial oath-taking last Saturday.

Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. administered the oath to Malonzo, Vice Mayor Luis Varela and the city's councilors, which included street activist Nathanael Santiago.

ANTI-MALONZO demonstrators at the Caloocan City Hall, according to Malonzo, should learn to accept defeat. VAL HANDUMON

QC jail warden relieved over suspect's escape

INTERIOR Secretary Jose Lina yesterday ordered the relief of the Quezon City jail warden and two subordinates after the alleged mastermind in the kidnapping and killing of the son of the late Quezon City Judge Marciano Bacalla escaped Friday afternoon.

Lina also ordered the filing of criminal and administrative charges against jail warden Chief Insp. Alberto Santos and jail guards JO1s Luisito Torres and Roderick Sibuna following the escape of suspect Onofre Surat.

The Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) replaced Santos with Supt. Primitivo Benitez as Quezon City jail chief.

Surat escaped from the custody of Torres and Sibuna on Friday afternoon at the East Avenue Medical Center, where he was supposed to undergo some medical tests.

The suspect allegedly complained of severe chest pains on Friday afternoon. Chief Insp. Nida Ramos, jail medical officer, recommended that Surat be taken to the EAMC.

Santos apparently approved the suspect's transfer to the hospital for fear that he might die in jail. Surat was taken to the EAMC around 3 p.m. Friday.

Lina said Quezon City jail officials should not have allowed Surat to leave the jail without a court order.

Surat escaped while he was about to have an X-ray. Surat was arrested for his alleged role in the kidnap-slaying of Mark Bacalla on May 2.

The Bacalla family paid ransom money to the suspects who, however, still killed the young Bacalla.

The police rescue operations for Bacalla also led to the killing by mistake of New World Hotel chief steward Fernando Lozada and his daughter's friend, Marian Uson.

Lozada and Uson were killed after police officers fired at their car on May 17 on Araneta Avenue. The officers mistook Lozada's car for the escape vehicle of the kidnapping suspects.

National Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco said he has ordered the bureau's National Capital Region Office, headed by lawyer Edmund Arugay, to track down Surat.

Philip C. Tubeza, Jerome Aning

Man kills own brother

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

A MAN on Sunday killed his older brother, said to be a drug addict, for hurting the former's 2-year-old daughter and 58-year-old father in Malabon City, police said.

Police said Glenlie Retis Jr., 21, stabbed to death his brother Ferdinand, 26, in their house on Pilapil Street in Sitio 6, Barangay Catmon at about 8 p.m. Sunday.

Glenlie was enraged when his brother Ferdinand, said to be high on drugs, came home and began berating members of his family, said investigator PO2 Redentor Mantala.

Ferdinand slapped Glenlie's daughter and threatened to hit their father, Glenlie Sr., with a wooden club, Mantala said.

Glenlie tried to restrain his brother, but the latter only became more violent and challenged him to a fight, the investigator said. Glenlie then chased his brother and stabbed him in the chest and arm.

The suspect remains at large.

Was Lacson capable of crime?

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THE ALLEGED sins of former Philippine National Police chief Panfilo Lacson will hound him up to the halls of the Senate.

If he has plans of running for president in 2004 he might as well forget it. At the rate accusations against him are surfacing practically every day, he'll have a hard time defending himself at the bar of public opinion.

No matter how he denies the charges the public perception is that he committed the crimes he is accused of. Being found guilty is different from being perceived guilty. The former needs a lot of proof and entails a long legal process; the latter only a modicum of doubt on a person's innocence.

* * *

Was Lacson capable of ordering the kidnap-murder of publicist Bubby Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito? Was he capable of masterminding the killing of 11 suspected members of the Kuratong Baleleng gang more than six years ago? Was he capable of ordering the assassination of top officials to destabilize the Macapagal-Arroyo administration?

If you asked a former police reporter who covered Lacson when he was a first lieutenant at the dreaded Metrocom Intelligence and Security Group (MISG) in the late 1970s, he would say, "yes, he's capable of the crimes imputed to him."

That reporter is yours truly.

* * *

I covered the MISG for the Times Journal and then the Manila Bulletin from 1977 up to the 1980s. When I was first assigned to the MISG, the most dreaded military unit at the time, Lacson was still a first lieutenant. He was directly under then Capt. Reynaldo Berroya, head of the MISG's police intelligence branch. Both Lacson and Berroya were subordinates of then Lt. Col. Rolando Abadilla, the MISG chief.

I saw Lacson's fast promotion from first lieutenant to lieutenant colonel in a span of a few years. A member of Philippine Military Academy Class of 1971, he was the youngest lieutenant colonel in his time. He "flew" from captain to lieutenant colonel. Would you believe he only carried the rank of major — which is between captain and lieutenant colonel—for only a few days?

* * *

I'm ashamed to say it now but when I was covering the MISG, I knew that most of the killings of criminals slain by Lacson's men did not take place in shootouts. Rather, they were shot dead while in captivity.

Then, I rationalized that the executions of those criminals meant that they could no longer do harm to innocent citizens. That's the reason I always wrote that the dead criminals were killed in shootouts as the MISG filed in its after-mission reports.

The following is an example:

The Bank of P.I. branch in Cubao, Quezon City was held up by several armed men in 1978 (if memory serves). To cut the story short, the captured robbers who were not killed at the bank after they surrendered were taken to the MISG headquarters in Camp Crame.

I was gathering data on the number of robbers who were killed and captured at the Metrocom Investigation Unit (MIU), headed by then Maj. Leandro Mendoza, when there was a call for me.

"Mon, what's your number of suspects killed in the shootout with MISG operatives?" asked the voice at the other end of the line. It was Lacson who was calling from his office at the MISG which was directly behind the MIU building.

If I'm not mistaken I said I had four dead suspects, citing records from that MIU. Lacson said, "Make it five."

And then a shot rang out. It came from the MISG headquarters.

Lacson gave me the name of the fifth slain bank robbery suspect.

* * *

In the military, they say that a good leader is also a good follower. Lacson was an excellent subordinate. He followed orders from his superiors without question.

Lacson's superior at the MISG, the military unit that molded him, was Colonel Abadilla. Abadilla was notorious for his ruthlessness toward criminals and allegedly even toward innocent citizens who crossed him.

Since Lacson was a good subordinate he naturally chose people who followed his orders blindly when he was chief of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF).

* * *

Looking back to the time Lacson, as PNP chief, was very sparing in issuing permits for citizens to carry firearms outside of their residences, I can guess the reason why he did that.

Lacson didn't want law-abiding citizens to carry guns because he didn't want to give them the wherewithal to fight criminals.

And from what we're now hearing about the PAOCTF, the criminals were Lacson's men.

He didn't want law-abiding citizens to shoot back when criminal PAOCTF agents shot at them.

Look what happened to Dacer. If Dacer had a gun and knew how to use it, those PAOCTF agents who abducted him would have had second thoughts.

Sta. Cruz church robbed of antique

THE CURATE of the Espiritu Santo Parish in Sta. Cruz, Manila yesterday appealed to the culprits who stole the antique monstrance from the parish church's adoration chapel over the weekend to return the religious item.

Msgr. Alberto Salonga Jr. said he and church workers discovered the theft of the golden monstrance—a vessel used in exposing the consecrated Host to worshippers—before the start of the 5:30 a.m. Mass on Sunday.

The loss of the item was quickly reported to the nearby Western Police District Station 3.

The parish priest said he is offering a P5,000 reward to anyone who has information leading to the recovery of the monstrance. *Jerome Aning*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, July 3, 2001
St. Thomas, Apostle

1st Reading: Eph 2:19-22
Gospel: Jn 20:24-29

Thomas, the Twin, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples told him, "We have seen the *Lord*." But he replied, "Until I have seen in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

Eight days later, the disciples were inside again and Thomas was with them. Despite the locked doors Jesus came and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands; stretch out your hand and put it into my side. Resist no longer and be a believer."

Thomas then said, "You are my *Lord* and my God." Jesus replied, "You believe because you see me, don't you? Happy are those who have not seen and believe."

Commentary

John describes in his gospel the love story of God with his people that is to culminate in the wedding of God and people at the fullness of time. This marriage actually took place when Jesus demonstrated his love for the people to the very end on the cross, and was ratified by the resurrection. The signs of this ultimate love are the wounds in the side and in the hands and feet of the Risen Lord. Thomas, the beloved disciple, had the privilege of verifying these signs. Once he saw the signs, he exclaimed: My Lord and my God! In other words: it is true! God had married his people! Since this realization is based on faith, Jesus blesses the people who rely on faith rather than on seeing.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the love of Jesus up to the very end. We ask you, grant that we may love one another just as he loved us.

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: claret@cn1.net; Websites: http://www.bible.claret.org (Claretian Publications Inc.) & http://missionaries.claret.org (Claretians in the Philippines)

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

JUDICIAL ETHICS—Attitude of judge towards litigants—Respondent judge need to be reminded that government service is people-oriented. Patience is an essential part of dispensing justice and courtesy is a mark of culture and good breeding. Belligerent behavior has no place in government service where personnel are enjoined to act with self-restraint and civility at all times even when confronted with rudeness and insolence. [Reference: Rule 3.04 of the Code of Judicial Conduct] [Citations omitted.] [Justice Ynares-Santiago, First Division, Cañas v. Castigador, G.R. No. 139844, December 15, 2000]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

Tofil 2001

THE ANNUAL search for The Outstanding Filipinos (Tofil) is ongoing.

The Tofil Award is given to outstanding Filipino men and women, who are at least 41 years old and who have made significant contributions to the upliftment of their profession and to national development.

Since 1988, its sponsors, Insular Life Assurance Co. Ltd. and the Philippine Jaycee Senate, have honored 66 outstanding Filipinos in various fields.

Any individual, public or private entity or organization may nominate candidates in agriculture, arts and culture, business and industry, community/humanitarian services, religious work, environment, education, finance, government/public service, justice/law, labor, medicine, literature, media, military/police work, science & technology, sports, and peace advocacy.

Nominations are accepted at all Jaycees Senate chapter offices and Insular Life field offices nationwide.

Deadline for submission of nomination forms is Aug. 31, 2001. Call PJS Secretariat at 373-4390 or the Insular Life head office at 771-1818 extension 1121, 1122 or 1123.

4 bombs caused Parañaque fire

BY ALCUIN PAPA

FOUR homemade bombs were said to have set off the fire that hit Parañaque City Hall on Thursday, police said yesterday.

Based on an initial report sent to Parañaque City Mayor Joey Marquez, the bombs were homemade but very sophisticated.

Police said the bombing might have something to do with Marquez's controversial win in the last elections.

Supporters of losing candidate Pablo Olivares had been picketing city hall grounds to protest the victory of Marquez, whom they accused of widespread cheating.

The report did not specify if the bombing was part of a "destabilization" plot against the local administration or an "assassination" attempt on Marquez.

The four bombs, police said, were planted in the Urban Poor Affairs Office behind a bathroom near the conference room.

The resulting fire destroyed the UPAO and adjoining offices of the city councilors and the Commission on Audit. Total damage was estimated at P15 million.

Marquez yesterday accused his opponents of hiring bombers to carry out the attacks. He has ordered the city's chief legal officer and Parañaque police chief Supt. Ronald Estilles to conduct a joint investigation of the bomb attack on city hall and gave them until Monday to submit their report.

The city hall blaze started at 6 p.m. on the second floor of the building.

Investigators have pinned the blame on arsonists and invited four persons for questioning. The suspects were later released for lack of evidence.

Tension ran high in Parañaque yesterday when supporters of Olivares stormed city hall to protest the swearing in of city officials by Marquez.

Two of the protesters were later arrested for allegedly causing a commotion. They were identified as Melchor Santos of San Dionisio, Parañaque and Rodrigo Opelada of Olivares Compound, Parañaque. The two are now detained at the city jail.

The mayor's media coordinator Lane Afable said Marquez took his oath of office sometime last week before Vice President Teofisto Guingona.

Atienza unhappy over anti-rob drive

BY JEROME ANING

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza yesterday expressed displeasure over the acting Western Police District director's performance in the anti-robbery campaign.

"You cannot just wait for victims to report a crime before you act," Atienza told Senior Supt. Nicolas Pasinos Jr., the acting WPD chief. "You have to take a pro-active stance and go after these criminal groups. Prevention is the key."

The mayor expressed particular concern over the cases of car thefts and holdup, particularly in the city's Malate, Ermita and Quiapo districts, that took place during the weekend.

Saturday afternoon, overseas contract worker Gamar Tamar, 37, lost P20,000 cash to four armed men who held him up on P. Casal Street in San Miguel, Quiapo.

Sunday morning, two employees of the Philamlife insurance firm were robbed of P19,000 at the corner of United Nations and Taft avenues.

Friday evening, journalist-lawyer Reden Viaje of the Manila Bulletin was victimized by a "*bukas-kotse*" gang in front of the Century Park Sheraton Hotel in Malate.

Viaje said his Land Rover, which he parked in front of the hotel, was forcibly opened. He said he lost, among others, a leather valise, car stereo and other personal items.

Earlier in the morning, a female member of the hotel's gymnasium was held up at knife-point. Two cases of jeepney robbery in Ermita were reported on Saturday.

Atienza called the string of robberies "unacceptable" and said City Hall's program to revive Manila "would be severely affected by incidents like these because it is predicated on the assurance that citizens can walk (on) our streets anytime without fear of being victimized by criminal elements."

He told Pasinos to deploy more police teams, especially in "high-risk" areas, to augment the regular police mobile and foot patrols.

"I want substantial results, the sooner the better," Atienza told the police colonel. "We have to maintain at all costs the high degree of public confidence in our police force that we have been trying to develop over the past few years."

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SM CENTERPOINT 7149522-7161416

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5	TOMB RAIDER
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7	EVOLUTION
8	PEARL HARBOR
9	ACCIDENTAL SPY
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SM CITY FAIRVIEW 9358049

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SM CITY MANILA 5238240

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10	MILA
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2	HEAD OVER HEELS
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6	DR. T & THE WOMEN
7	MILA
8	THE REPLICANT
9	MILA
10	TOMB RAIDER
11	BUHAY KAMAO
12	ACCIDENTAL SPY

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1	TOMB RAIDER
2	EVOLUTION
3	MILA
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SM NORTH EDSA 9095452

1	TOMB RAIDER
2	MILA
3	LUV TEXT
4	APOY SA KARAGATAN
5	ACCIDENTAL SPY
6	PEARL HARBOR
7	EVOLUTION
8	TOMB RAIDER
9	DR. T & THE WOMEN
10	MILA
11	HEAD OVER HEELS
12	TOMB RAIDER

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2	PEARL HARBOR
3	TOMB RAIDER
4	EVOLUTION
5	KASIBULAN
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8	TOMB RAIDER
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10	LUV TEXT

SM GUADALUPE COMM'L 8820805

1	MILA
2	TOMB RAIDER
3	KASIBULAN

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2	THE REPLICANT
3	PEARL HARBOR
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5	BUHAY KAMAO
6	MILA
7	TOMB RAIDER

SM ILOILO 3209422

1	LUV TEXT
2	CLOSED
3	PEARL HARBOR
4	BUHAY KAMAO
5.	MILA
6	TOMB RAIDER
7	CLOSED
8	THE REPLICANT

SM PAMPANGA 7120015

1	TOMB RAIDER
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3	EVOLUTION
4	MILA
5	HEAD OVER HEELS
6	TOMB RAIDER

SM SUCAT 8294875

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2	MILA
3	TOMB RAIDER
4	EVOLUTION

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3	ACCIDENTAL SPY	TOMB RAIDER THX in DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND	ACCIDENTAL SPY in DTS DIGITAL SOUND	EVOLUTION in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND	TOMB RAIDER in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
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Art Film

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MOVIE GUIDE

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9 (DOLBY)	LUV TEXT
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Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	MILA
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5	
6 (DTS)	

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Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3
(Kalaw) tel 536.4315

1 (DOLBY)	TOMB RAIDER
2 (DTS)	ACCIDENTAL SPY
3	MILA

Masagana CINEMA 888
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1	MILA
2	TOMB RAIDER
3	ACCIDENTAL SPY

stormall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	EVOLUTION
2	MILA
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5	APOY SA KARAGATAN

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543.4001

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2	RESERVE
3	MILA
4	LUV TEXT
5	KASIBULAN
6	TOMB RAIDER
7	ACCIDENTAL SPY
8	APOY SA KARAGATAN

LOUIE'S CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010 / 892.3349

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Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

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FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC
tel 930.9515

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Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

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A	LOVE ME TENDER

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(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

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2	MILA
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4	EVOLUTION

GOTESCO CINEMA

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8 (SDDS)	TOMB RAIDER
9 (DOLBY)	PEARL HARBOR

Caloocan
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Grand Central
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3	APOY SA KARAGATAN
4	ACCIDENTAL SPY
5 (SDDS)	EVOLUTION
6	LUV TEXT
7 (DOLBY)	TOMB RAIDER
8	KASIBULAN

Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	TOMB RAIDER
2	APOY SA KARAGATAN
3 (DTS)	ACCIDENTAL SPY
4	MILA
5 (SDDS)	TOMB RAIDER

Universal
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Dilson
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Dilson	AN DECENT BEHAVIOR
Lords	APOY SA KARAGATN
Jennet	MILA

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2	MILA
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4	ACCIDENTAL SPY

Prima
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1	
3	MILA

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA tel 733.4238

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2	ACCIDENTAL SPY
3	APOY SA KARAGATAN
4	MILA
5	LUV TEXT

New Divisoria Mall
CINEMA tel 244.4619

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2	APOY SA KARAGATAN
3	KASIBULAN
4	LUV TEXT
5	ACCIDENTAL SPY
6	TOMB RAIDER

Baclaran LRT
CINEMA tel 512.0115

1 (DOLBY)	MILA
2	TOMB RAIDER
3	APOY SA KARAGATAN
4	
5	

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
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tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	MILA
2	KASIBULAN
3 (DTS)	TOMB RAIDER

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	MILA
2 (DTS)	THE REPLICANT
3 (DOLBY)	TOMB RAIDER
4	EVOLUTION

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	ACCIDENTAL SPY
2	KASIBULAN
3	MILA
4 (DTS)	TOMB RAIDER

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	TOMB RAIDER
2	MILA
3 (DTS)	LUVTEXT
4	KASIBULAN
5	THE REPLICANT

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	MILA
2	TOMB RAIDER
3	THE REPLICANT

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101

1	MILA
2	TOMB RAIDER
3	THE REPLICANT

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	PEARL HARBOR
2	MILA
3	BUHAY KAMAO

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	MILA
2	TOMB RAIDER
3	THE REPLICANT

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	MILA
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Fourstep
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1	MILA

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

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3	MILA

Fiesta World Mall
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1	LUV TEXT
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3	MILA
4	THE REPLICANT

Berma
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2	TOMB RAIDER

CitiMall
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3	MILA
4	TOMB RAIDER

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

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3	HEAD OVER HEELS
4 (DTS EX)	EVOLUTION

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- THE MUMMY RETURNS
- MILA
- GET OVER IT
- TOMB RAIDER

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- TOMB RAIDER
- MILA
- EVOLUTION
- PEARL HARBOR
- ACCIDENTAL SPY

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453

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- HEAD OVER HEELS
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- PEARL HARBOR
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THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	LUV TEXT
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	MILA
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	TOMB RAIDER
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	EVOLUTION
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	ACCIDENTAL SPY
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	PEARL HARBOR
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	TOMB RAIDER
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	TOMB RAIDER
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	ACCIDENTAL SPY
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT / SPLENDOR
ODEON	TOMB RAIDER
ODEON-2	ACCIDENTAL SPY
ROBEN	MILA
TANDEM-1	KASIBULAN
TANDEM-2	SIN OF THE NIGHT
TIMES	3,000 MILES / WHAT WOMEN WANTS

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	APOY SA KARAGATAN
QUEZON-1	TOMB RAIDER
REMAR	MILA
REMAR-2	ACCIDENTAL SPY

CUBAO

OCEAN SUPERAMA	BABAENG PUTIK
OCEAN CINEMA-A	PANABLA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	CRISELDA

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	DR. T & THE WOMEN
CINEMA-2	TOMB RAIDER

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BUHAY KAMAO
CINEMA-2	KASIBULAN
CINEMA-3	APOY SA KARAGATAN
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HEAD OVER HEELS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	TOMB RAIDER
CINEMA-6	THE MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-7	LUV TEXT
CINEMA-8	MILA
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	TOMB RAIDER
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	TOMB RAIDER
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	EVOLUTION
CINEMA-12	ACCIDENTAL SPY
CINEMA-14	PEARL HARBOR
CINEMA-15	MILA

LORES

CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED

POWER PLANT CINEMA

CINEMA-1	MILA
CINEMA-2	EVOLUTION
CINEMA-3	TOMB RAIDER
CINEMA-4	TOMB RAIDER
CINEMA-5	ACCIDENTAL SPY
CINEMA-6	TOMB RAIDER

UNIWIDE METROMALL

(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	EXIT WOUNDS
CINEMA-2	KAMANDAG NG ROSAS
CINEMA-4	BLONDIE - 2

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	EXIT WOUNDS
CINEMA-2	DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT
CINEMA-4	HIYAS

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

Lovers, exes and other friends

I HAD a blast during the bash of Aga Muhlach's best friend Gelo Serrano. Aga and Gelo go a long way back.

Naturally Aga and Charlene were around. If there's one thing Aga hates, it's being interviewed during non-showbiz affairs, so I just let him be that night. I pinched him on the cheeks and teased him about being "*kuripot*" because until now he has not replaced my cell phone that got soaked when he pushed me into a swimming pool. He retorted, "It was Albert and Troy who pushed you, not I!"

He and Charlene were on a food binge celebrating "their pregnancy."

Other guests at the party came up to me and asked, "Why did Carmina Villaroel suddenly leave when Rustom Padilla arrived?" I just smiled and said, "Self-explanatory."

Got to chat with Geneva Cruz and she clarified the rumor about her walking out of KC Montero's party. "You were there so you know it's not true." I egged her on: "So when will you and KC reveal the real score between the two of you?" She beamed, "We don't have to announce that we're in love. What you see is what you get. It might sound corny if we admit that we're together, like his brother Troy and Troy's girlfriend Nikki. It's understood."

Gen also told me that her ex-beau Paco Arrespacochaga will be migrating to the US. "I think it's better for him. He has an offer to do a recording there. I hope things work out for him."

She's elated that she's part of the cast of "Rent" along with Rachel Alejandro, Lee Robin Salazar and Michael de Mesa, among others. Rachel and Lee Robin were seated quietly in one corner, obviously very much in love with each other. Manila Councilor Kim Atienza was also around. I congratulated him on his reelection. Ever so humble, he replied, "It's really a team effort. You've seen how our family worked together during the elections because you were there during the canvassing of votes."

I teased him about his girlfriend in London. He smiled, "Thanks to text messaging. It keeps us closer somehow."

Also at the party were Karen Davila and her boyfriend DJ. I cornered her: "Wedding bells soon?" She blushed: "Not yet but we're talking about it already."

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6:00 PM - Tomb raider
8:20 PM - Blocked Off
10:40 PM - Tomb Raider

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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Radio talk show host Art Bell not behind insulting e-mail

NEVADA-BASED radio talk show host Art Bell is in no way connected to a "malicious and vile e-mail" that insults Filipinos and that has been attributed to him.

"The charge that Mr. Bell wrote the e-mail is a statement of fact," Bell's legal counsel Gerard Fox said in a letter faxed to the INQUIRER from Los Angeles. "This statement is false. Even a cursory glance at Mr. Bell's website or an inquiry sent to Mr. Bell or his representatives would have established the e-mail was a fraudulent Internet posting not written by Art Bell."

We did not check out Bell's website when we received the e-mail forwarded by Alejandro. When we finally did look at http://www.artbell.com/filipino.html, it turned out Bell had printed his denial there more than two years ago.

The INQUIRER apologizes for its failure to investigate the source of the e-mail. It regrets the error.

Fox said the e-mail was written in December 1998 by a person impersonating Bell.

The e-mail was forwarded to the INQUIRER by Channel News Asia newscaster Jennifer Alejandro, who is based in Singapore. It was the subject of this writer's Show Biz Tidbits column on Sunday, July 1.

The e-mail contained offensive statements about Filipinos like. "Nothing good has ever come from Philippines and I don't believe anything good ever will," it said. "Your country is a disgusting and filthy place.

"That's all you are. Just Filipino. Think about what that means."

Fox wrote: "These statements are extremely provocative and likely to incite violence against their author. Mr. Bell is now concerned about his own safety and the safety of his family. To publish such statements without the most exhaustive investigation is unspeakably irresponsible on both a journalistic and a human level."

Filipinos from as far as Florida and Norway sent e-mail messages to the INQUIRER, some attacking Bell while others were pointing out that the message was fake.

Fox said "Mr. Bell has received a barrage of hate-mail, including numerous threats of violence and death. To protect his reputation and the safety of his family, Mr. Bell has gone out of his way to inform people he was in no way connected to this malicious and vile e-mail."

We also got a letter from Keith Rowland, system administrator of Bell's website www.artbell.com, who said the e-mail message did not originate from their mail server.

"Back in December 1998, there were some racist posting made in several news groups on the Internet by a person/s impersonating Art Bell," Rowland wrote. "They have used the ID of KatLover@artbell.com.

"The letters that show artbel-irc.com as the website are also fake and have not been written nor sent by Art Bell. Please review all the headers of all messages that you have received and send your complaints to that domain's sysop. The messages are originating at ucsd.edu (University of California in San Diego) and the fake 'from' address was simply typed in.

"It is absurd to think that a public figure and professional radio host would make such a posting," Rowland wrote. *Leah Salterio*

Boob-tube boo boos

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOST: What is so unique about your club?

Club owner: It's the only place where music videos are done live!

(Live? *E, di hindi na* video!)

* * *

Anchorperson: What's the latest on the ongoing Abu Sayyaf drama in Basilan?

Field reporter: *Patuloy pa rin hanggang ngayon ang paghahanap ng mga* hostess *ng mga bandido!*

(Will kidnap, have fun!)

* * *

Host: Do you confirm or deny all the rumors about you *na kumakalat sa* show biz circles these days?

Starlet: Not denial *naman, sinasabi ko lang na hindi ko ginawa!*

(Duh . . .)

* * *

Host: Can you describe what you felt when you won the beauty contest?

Beauty queen: Oh, very emotion *talaga ang nangyari sa gabing 'yon*!

(Touched *naman kami* . . .)

* * *

Host: What did you do in the States?

Starlet: I looked for my father, *na matagal ko nang hindi nakita.*

Host: *Nagkita ba kayo*?

Starlet: *Oo*, finally.

Host: *Kumusta naman ang* meeting *niyo*?

Starlet: *Ang ganda*, it was a long-lost reunion!

(Whee!)

* * *

Host: What dish are you going to prepare for us this week?

Guest cook: It's seafood pasta with a special lobster sauce.

Host: What's the secret for making a good lobster sauce?

Guest cook: You really have to be patient. You must let it sit down for at least 12 hours!

(Huh?!)

* * *

Host: Is the make-up and hairstyle of our model finished?

Guest make-up artist: Almost. Only one last finishing touch *na lang*.—there!

Host: Beautiful! Ladies and gentlemen, we would like to show you the finished product of our beautiful model!

(*Ay*, finished product!)

* * *

Anchorperson: *Ano'ng balita diyan sa* Pasay?

Field reporter: *May lolang pinagnakawan kahapon ng kanyang* driver. *Nilimas ang kanyang mga alahas na nagkakahalaga ng isang bilyong piso*!

(Wow, rich *si lola*!)

* * *

Host: What can viewers expect from your group's performance today?

Guest: There will be questions and answers after the members of our group have reformed themselves!

(Huh?!)

* * *

Host: Do you believe in marriage, or live-in?

Guest: Live-in—*pero* only after married *na kayo*!

(*E, di hindi na* live-in *yon*!)

OPENS TOMORROW!

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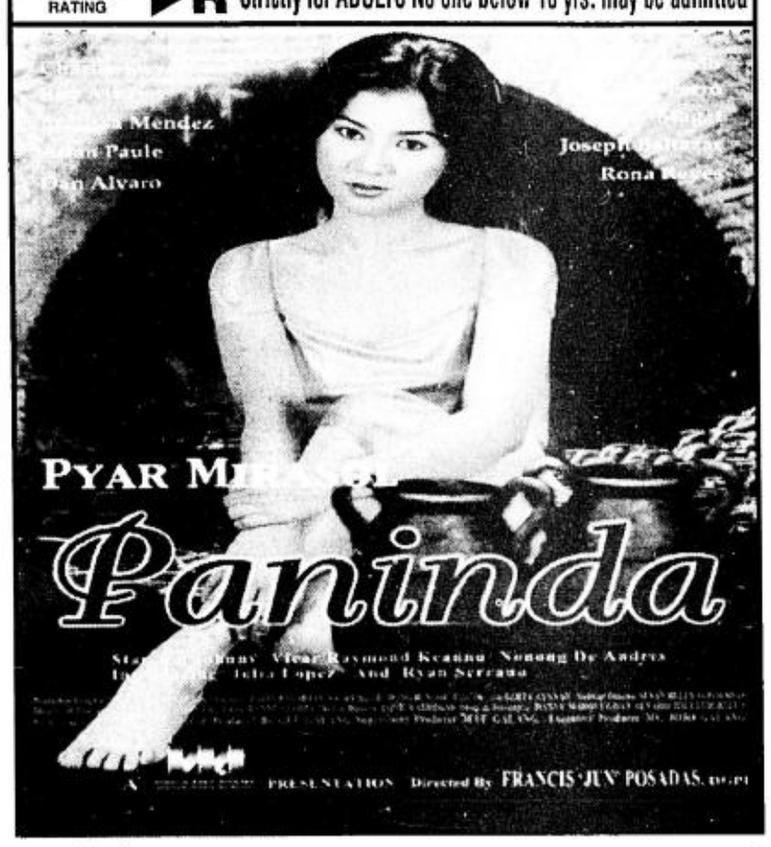

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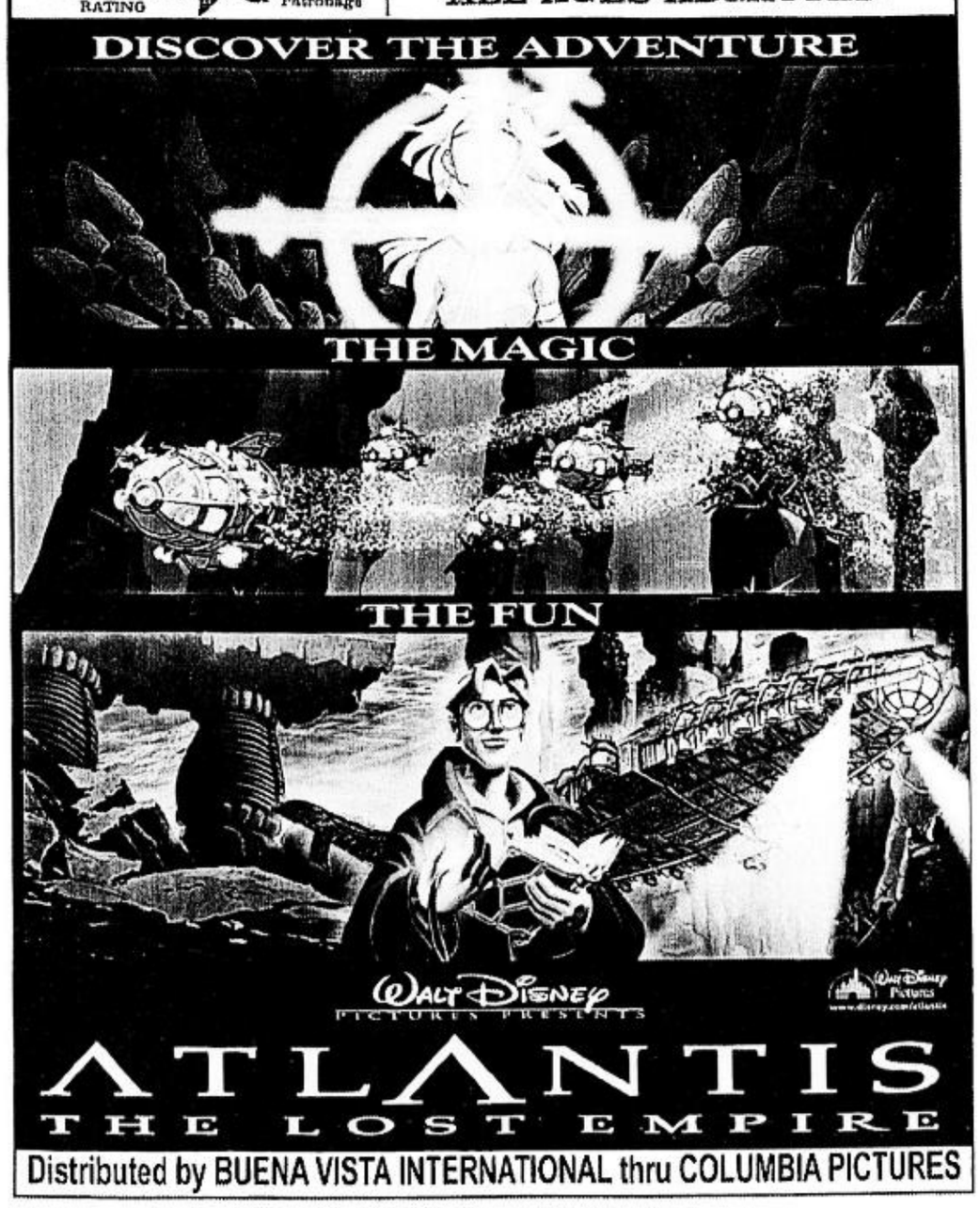

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TOMB RAIDER - P 13 1:00, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30, 9:40	ACCIDENTAL SPY - P 13 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50	TOMB RAIDER - P 13 11:30, 1:40, 3:50, 6:00, 8:10, 10:20

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BUSINESS

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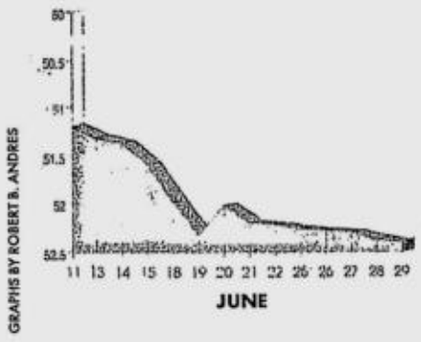
Peso hits 5-month low at 52.70 to $1

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



GRAPHS BY ROBERT B. ANDRES

Peso-Dollar Rate

₱52.70 = $1
As of 5 p.m., July 2, 2001

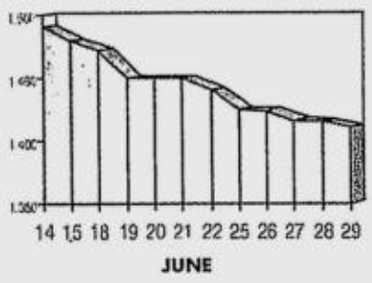
¥124.64 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 124.64 as of 5 p.m., July 2, 2001

GOLD:$269.60/270.10
per ounce Hong Kong, June 29, 2001

STOCK MARKET

Shares end down

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B6)

STOCKS extended their decline for the eighth straight session on Monday, as the falling peso and gloomy economic prospects triggered selling by foreign investors.

"What's the incentive to buy into the market? The Philippines continued to be plagued by economic and political problems," said A&A Securities research head Astrolito del Castillo.

"If you look at it, there's no positive news to perk up the market. There's a sudden barrage of negative developments," said Manny Cruz of Mark Securities.

"The weaker peso, the pressure on interest rates and the hostage crisis all had their expected impact on the market," added Roberto Cano of BPI Securities Corp.

The Philippine main index closed down 14.28 points, or 1.01 percent, at 1,395.79 points. The Philippine stock market now ranks as the seventh worst performing market in the region.

Decliners outclassed gainers 34 to 20 and there were 47 stocks unchanged on volume of P543.11 million. *Reuters, AFP*

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

A DEARTH of positive news coupled with a slow dollar inflow and aggressive buying yesterday pushed the peso down by more than 30 centavos to a five-month low of 52.70 to $1.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas still refused to intervene and sell dollars in the market even as it stressed that transactions were being observed for any sign of speculation.

"We are monitoring to see if there was any speculation. So far, we think the weakness was due to quarter-end demand and also the Abu Sayyaf and the kidnappings," Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura said.

Bangko Sentral Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said a maturing obligation of an oil company was instrumental in pushing demand up and forced some firms to buy foreign exchange at a high of P52.73 to $1.

Tetangco said the market was anticipating the entry of $500 million to $600 million from a telecommunications company. Market sources believed it could be the proceeds of a planned bond float of PLDT.

The peso opened at 52.50 to $1, already weaker than last Friday's level of 52.395. Traders said the peso may lose 10 to 20 centavos in the coming days.

Deputy National Treasurer Eduardo Mendiola also blamed the peso's weakness yesterday for the lackluster auction of treasury bills. He said banks appeared to be shifting part of their liquidity to the foreign exchange market rather than using these funds to buy government securities.

As a result, bids for longer-term instruments were lower than what the Treasury normally offers.

Buenaventura said the slight uptick in the 91-day treasury bill yields was expected after the BSP had kept overnight rates steady last Thursday.

The benchmark rate went up by 4.2 basis points to 8.77 percent while the six-month and one-year instruments rose by 16.2 basis points and 12.9 points to 9.942 percent and 11.221 percent.

"The rates of longer tenor instruments went up because of fears that the government's deficit may go up," the BSP chief said.

Had the Treasury accepted all bids for the six-month and one-year debt papers, the 182-day treasury bill rate would have gone up by 40 basis points to 10.5 percent and the 364-day by 27 basis points to 11.625 percent.

The central bank governor said he had abandoned his optimistic stance on the peso and said "rates will be sticky for a while."

Buenaventura said the central bank was prepared to intervene in the market when necessary. "We had said we could come in anytime so the market had been waiting for it. But so far, we haven't intervened."

He said that while the recent peso weakness had slowed down dollar remittance from exports and overseas contract workers, there had been no signs of capital flight.

Gov't urged to resolve 'old' issues

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

BUSINESSMEN yesterday urged the fledgling Macapagal administration to give priority to resolving old issues—mainly lack of credit, rising costs, unabated smuggling, inefficient bureaucracy, and worsening internal security problem—that hounded the previous government.

They claimed that solving these problems had become more compelling with the sub-par performance of the industry sector due to a slowdown in the country's top export markets (United States and

GOV'T/ B2

ONGPIN

Ongpin group takes over mining company

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

THE GROUP of former trade minister Roberto Ongpin is taking over another mining firm, Itogon Suyoc Mines Inc. (ISMI), from the Ortigas family.

Similar to Ongpin's technology upstart Philweb.Com.Inc. (Philweb), ISMI, one of the country's oldest mining firms, will sell its mining operations and transform itself into an information technology company.

Philweb signed yesterday a memorandum of agreement with ISMI wherein the former would subscribe to 12 billion unissued shares of ISMI's authorized capital stock at a par value of one centavo each.

This will bring ISMI's subscribed shares to 30 billion, giving Ongpin's group an initial 40-percent control of the company, Philweb spokesperson Roberto San Jose said.

But the disclosure said ISMI had already agreed to allow new investors to have majority control and management of ISMI to implement its shift to an IT company. San Jose said ISMI would change its business thrust to IT, media, telecommunications or similar industry and negotiate with investors who would infuse the necessary capital or as-

ONGPIN/ B2

RP readies $500-M bond flotation

CAMACHO

FOREIGN investment banks have convinced the Macapagal administration to consider issuing at least $500 million in global bonds during a roadshow slated either late this month or in September.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said favorable foreign market conditions were making the national government re-think its earlier stance of pursuing a strictly no-deal roadshow in July or September.

Camacho said recent developments might convince the administration to shift to a deal roadshow even if the government has completed its foreign financing requirements following a series of private placements that would reach about $550 million by the end of this month.

The option was to reduce the volume of domestic borrowings and load part of the needs on the offshore fund-raising exercise. Camacho said part of the financing requirements for next year might be front-loaded as well.

"Banks helping us on the roadshow are telling us we could get attractive rates because of a lack of emerging market issues as well as a generally positive feeling toward the Philippines," the finance chief said.

Part of the lure, Camacho added, was the probability that the government could issue a longer tenor borrowing, possibly maturing in 10 years, with a reasonable pricing.

He said an eight- to 10-year bond carries a spread of about five percentage points over the six-month London interbank offered rate or Libor.

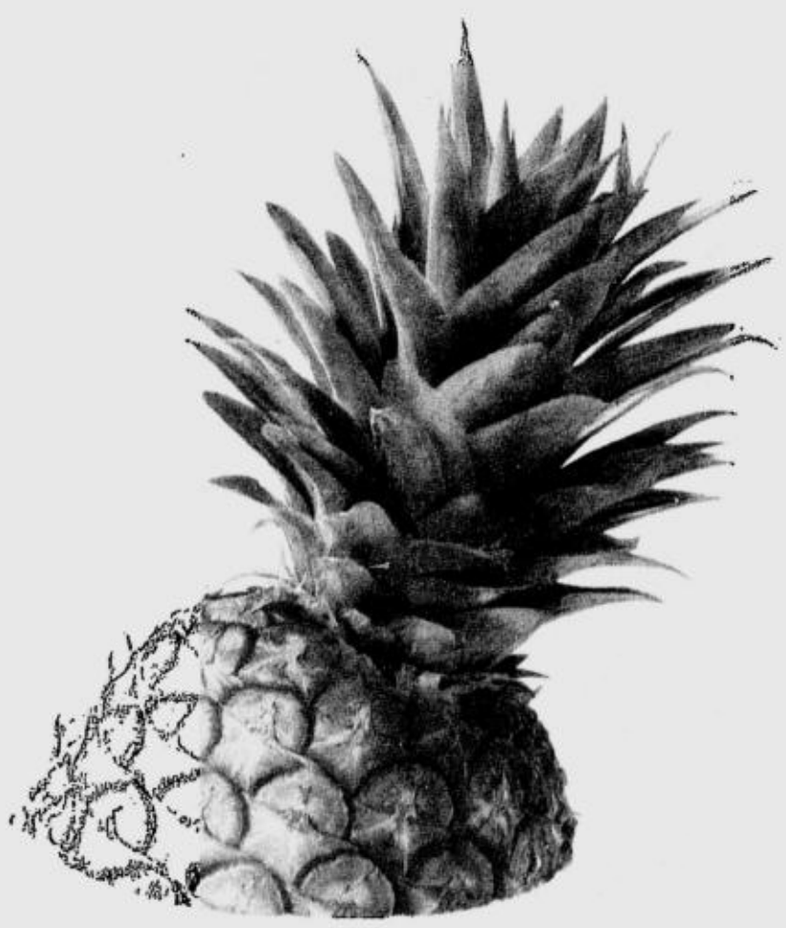
"A bond issue must have an economic size and $500 million is a good size. If we do it, the tenor must be at least 10 years and it should be a global bond," the finance chief said.

He said a longer tenor was important especially at a time when the country's maturity profile was starting to bunch up. The recent borrowings of the national government and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas were to mature in three to five years.

"It is a good thing to start looking at longer term maturities. Also, if we convert domestic borrowings to foreign, we would not crowd out the private sector," Camacho said.

The roadshow is being arranged by seven foreign investment banks led by Morgan Stanley

RP/ B2



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Start the bull ruling

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

THIS cute administration of Gloriaetta just hit pay dirt. Times are hard as they are, but on top of it, at least based on word going around business, a third force now also wishes Gloriaetta ill. They are the so-called Edsa Puwera. You know – "*echapuwera*!"

As you know, unless you spent the whole of last week cleaning your nose, the Palace is busy promoting this old rehashed line about destabilization. This allegedly features very influential people with very sick minds.

They supposedly come from the opposition. Nowadays, another way of saying "opposition" is, well, all those stupid plotters actually follow orders coming from a government hospital with a golf course.

And that means none other than the man named Band ... Wrist Band. Let's say all that is true. So what do the plotters hope to gain? Sleep-overs with Wrist Band in the hospital and free enemas in the morning?

It is said they actually want to take over power from Gloriaetta. At this time? I don't think so. Those who think that lightning can strike twice, must really be very optimistic. This, or they have damaged brains which were fixed with ducting tape.

* * *

IN business, nevertheless, they are saying that Gloriaetta should only expect the opposition to do a lot of opposing. What else can they do? By definition, members of the opposition have nothing better to do. That's why they are involved in politics.

In reality, the concern of this cute administration must have something to do with 2004. That's only three years away! Everybody is preparing. Just ask those Forbes Park groups endorsing, openly, Senators Sergio Osmeña III and Lloren Legarda.

Among them are the so-called Edsa Puwera. They were the same forces which helped Gloriaetta gain power. The only problem is, well, they didn't get some of it for themselves. And so they have to try again and have their candidate win in 2004.

Of course, for their candidate to have a chance against an "incumbent," Gloriaetta must become the very model of incompetence, failure and bad temper. This is the kind of destabilization which worries business. Nobody may help her administration anymore.

As for the opposition, they can only be expected to pounce on Gloriaetta, personally, and the failure of this cute administration to perk up the economy pronto. It's the role of the opposition. Otherwise, they can just go sell recycled condom.

* * *

MAYBE you also heard what happened to former House Speaker and soon-to-be House Speaker again Jose de Venecia. It seems the poor man got a number of calls from some bigtime businessmen, asking whether he got the money. What money?

In anything which has even just a tiny trace of the word "congressman," you need money. Quick, think of "pork," what word comes to mind? That's what I mean.

So when Yoda Venecia decided to seek the speakership again, for a rare record of three terms, it seems somebody went around corporate offices to get contributions for and in behalf of Yoda. The money never reached the poor man.

Despite his suffering such a special kind of daytime robbery, Yoda has the numbers to win the speakership. Well, even lopsidedly! So confident is his group about their getting the position, they even prepared an economic plan. Written *pa nga*!

Typically Yoda, the plan even uses the usual catch word. It's called "747." It targets 7 percent growth for seven years. Why the number "7?" The plan says we need to grow that much that long to eradicate poverty. Yeah? Not for luck?

* * *

AT least Yoda has a plan, fantastic as it may sound. We can't say the same thing for somebody. Sure, it looks like an ambitious plan, given that we are growing at a dizzying rate for a snail that just had a vertigo attack.

And Yoda's 747 talks of a strategy. It will not wait for these bad times to turn worse. In other words, it wants the government itself to invest to start the economic ball rolling.

Thus the plan offers a way out of this vicious cycle of a sluggish economy which discourages investments which, in turn, leads to an even more sluggish economy which can only discourage investments all the more.

The plan notes that the government has more than $10 billion in unused cheap credit lines abroad, the so-called ODAs, or official development assistance. They are almost the pay-when-able type of loan. And we don't use them!

The problem is, according to the 747, the government could not provide the counterpart funding for those loans. Why? Because the funding became low priority in the budget. Yoda's 747 promises to change all that. Let's see.

* * *

SO the big three oil companies are at it again. One of them just raised pump prices of fuel. Before you know it, by a weird twist of fate, the two others are doing the same thing. Of course not a single word was said about it between them. It's an accident of timing.

Such a bull now rules the much lauded oil deregulation. And it's just one beauty of the program. Another beauty is, well, it allows the big three to make it hard for the new comers to put up gas stations to compete against theirs. Nice, *no*?

In Cavite, for instance, the new players are prevented — and by law, at that — to put up gas stations within a four kilometer radius from an existing station. Guess what stations are existing. Hint: Big ...

For some places like Cavite, a ban of four-kilometer radius means it's no longer viable for the new players to go into business there. It means you have to put up a station so far into the outskirts of town, you have to take a flight to go to the toilet.

Metro Pacific to give out Nenaco shares as dividends

By Doris C. Dumlao

PROPERTY developer Metro Pacific Corp. is set to unload its 87-percent stake in bleeding shipping firm Negros Navigation Co. by transferring the Nenaco shares to its stockholders.

Instead of rushing to sell Nenaco, MPC said in a statement yesterday that it would dispose of its entire equity interest in the shipping firm by distributing these as dividends to its shareholders.

With the transaction, MPC will thus be able to take out Nenaco from its balance sheet, as the shipping firm will cease to be a subsidiary.

"The dividend distribution, which will be effected upon completion of the pending capital restructuring of Nenaco, will further position MPC as a company focused on real estate and property development," the statement said.

The capital restructuring will increase the shares held by MPC, which originally owned only 55 percent of Nenaco when it bought into the shipping firm in 1998, to 87 percent of total equity.

This developed after MPC agreed to wipe out Nenaco's total debts amounting to P1.7 billion as part of the financial restructuring of the shipping company. Aside from cleaning up its balance sheet, MPC also earlier earmarked P1 billion in fresh capital for Nenaco.

"We've said that we're trying to focus MPC into becoming a premier property development and holding company. We have only three kinds of assets, property and then we have First eBank and then Nenaco," MPC president Ricardo Pascua said.

Pascua said management convinced the shareholders and the board of MPC to dispose of the shares in the form of dividends. He noted that it was the best time to do so since Nenaco has begun to see improvements in cash flow.

"Nenaco has been largely rehabilitated. We've strengthened management and we've managed to convince the government that shipping companies can't survive with very low (fare) rates. We've modernized some of its facilitates and completed the organizational restructuring and the early retirement and redundancy package has been completed without union trouble," Pascua said.

Most of the commitments made by management to strengthen Nenaco had been fulfilled, Pascua stressed.

MPC has long been planning to divest its controlling stake in Nenaco but has not been able to close any deal due to the poor prospects of the shipping sector. It has tapped British bank HSBC Corp. as the financial adviser to undertake its rehabilitation.

Nenaco provides integrated services in shipping, trucking, warehousing, forwarding and delivery of bulk and break-bulk cargoes.

PASCUA

Ongpin group . . .

(From page B1)

sets for the project.

He added that at ISMI's next stockholders' meeting, Ongpin would be elected chair while two of his people in Philweb, Jaime Gonzales and Alex Villamar, would be elected directors. Villamar is president of Philweb.

Philweb itself used to be a mining company named South Seas and Natural Resources Inc. before Ongpin's group took over in early 2000. It was then transformed into an IT company. Under the deal, Philweb would manage the transformation of ISMI into another IT company.

The price of ISMI shares has been sharply rising at the Philippine Stock Exchange during the last few weeks on rumors that it would be used as a backdoor listing vehicle. There were also speculations that the group of businessman Antonio "Tonyboy" Cojuangco would eventually buy into the company and use it as a vehicle for his satellite business.

But Eagle Equities Inc. president Joseph Roxas, a former PSE governor, yesterday said ISMI would be in violation of existing rules should it push through with the sale of new shares to Philweb below market price.

He said there was an existing ruling in the PSE that prescribed limits to the discount at which new shares could be offered so as to prevent the unfair dilution of other existing shareholders.

"If you sell shares at a price lower than market price, that's giving a preferential price. If the price is at market or higher, there's no problem," Roxas said.

Roxas noted that the 30-day average of ISMI stood at about three centavos, which means that the biggest discount that could be offered, would be at 2.4 centavos.

"Otherwise, they have to offer stock rights to other shareholders at the same price," he said.

ISMI closed at P0.0575 at the local bourse yesterday.

Gov't urged . . .

(From page B1)

Japan), the lingering political turmoil, the ballooning budget deficit and the continued decline of the country's competitiveness compared with that of its neighbors.

Businessmen and government agencies led by the Department of Trade and Industry held their midyear consultation to discuss the pressing issues that the industry sector wanted President Macapagal to address in her state-of-the-nation address in Congress this month. The meeting was organized by the Asian Institute of Management and Ramon V. del Rosario for Corporate Social Responsibility.

The business groups, led by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Federation of Philippines Industries, said these issues should be addressed to "arrest the looming slowdown and save businesses from closure."

The industry sector grew by a measly 0.1 percent in the first quarter this year from 4.4 percent last year due to sluggish performance in mining, construction and manufacturing.

Businessmen asked the President to encourage banks to lend more rather than invest their funds in fixed-income securities and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to relax its prudent measures to allow distressed companies to restructure their loans. They urged the government to go overseas for its financing requirements to avoid crowding out local borrowers.

To reduce the cost of doing business in the country, the business groups called for the reduction of tariffs on basic inputs to zero percent; fast-track the privatization of National Power Corp.; and expedite the implementation of high-impact infrastructure projects.

In stopping smuggling and unfair trade practices, the businessmen asked the government to close 700 of the 1,000 bonded warehouses that have been inactive as well as all duty-free shops outside the international ports.

The government should also impose deadlines in the processing of business licenses and permits to hasten their review while all agencies should implement their computerization plans.

The businessmen have pledged their full support to the drastic measures to be taken by President Macapagal, including a revamp in the agencies concerned, to resolve the crisis and restore peace and order.

RP readies $500-M . . .

(From page B1)

Dean Witter and JP Morgan Chase. Other members of the team are Credit Suisse First Boston, Deutsche Bank, HSBC, ING Barings, and Nomura Securities.

The economic team to be led by Camacho, a former country manager of Deutsche Bank, would meet with investors and creditors in the United States, Europe, and Asia to report on the recent achievements of the Macapagal administration.

The investment banks were supposed to handle the roadshow for free. But with a potential bond deal in the package, the banks are to get their usual fees and commissions.

Three of the seven participating banks, however, have already cornered a portion of the $550 million in borrowings arranged by the national government since last month.

Credit Suisse was given a mandate for a $200-million, three-year private placement. JP Morgan would handle a similar $100-million facility and HSBC would forge a similar deal for $250 million this month.

DISCLOSURES

METRO Pacific Corp. has declared its entire interest in **Negros Navigation Co. Inc.** as property dividend in favor of stockholders of record as of July 16.

* * *

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. has declared a cash dividend of P0.50 per share on its **Series "A," "I," "R," "W," "AA,"** 10-percent cumulative convertible preferred stock in favor of stockholders of record as of July 26 and shall be payable on Aug. 31. Also declared were cash dividends of P0.0027 per share per day on its **Series BB** 10-percent cumulative convertible preferred stock and P0.051944 per share per day on its **Series V** convertible preferred stock. Payment for Series BB shares shall be on Aug. 31 for stockholders as of July 26 while payment for Series V shall be on July 15 for stockholders as of June 30. Elected directors of the company were Antonio Cojuangco, Helen Dee, Ray Espinosa, Teodoro Locsin Jr., Vitaliano Nañagas II, Napoleon Nazareno, Bienvenido Nebres, Manuel Pangilinan, Albert del Rosario, Pedro Roxas, Taketo Suzuki, Mitsuhiro Takase and Ricardo Zarate.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Jardine Davies Inc.** were Timothy Bennett, Aloysius Colayco, Bi Yong Chungunco, Catherine Manahan, Anthony Nightingale, James Riley and Geoffrey Thomas.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Omico Corp.** were Fernando Chua, Tommy Kin Hing Tia, Philip King, Felicisimo Feria, Antonio Evangelista, Reynaldo Guevara, Hermenegildo Capuchino, Lincoln Tan Jr., Wilfredo Sanchez, Nelson Co and Juana Lourdes Buyson.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Pryce Corp.** were Salvador Escano, Joselin Fragada, Jacques Yves Dupasquier, Antonio Escano, Rafael Escano, David Go, Daniel Mijares, Evelyn Singson, Mario Silos, Sigurd Sperbund and Fernando Trinidad.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Vitarich Corp.** were Rogelio Sarmiento, Armando Escobar, Lorenzo Sarmiento Jr., Lydia Enrile, Jose Sarmiento, Soccoro Gatmaitan, Victoria Sarmiento, Senen Bacani, Benjamin Sarmiento Jr., Lamberto Villena and Eligio Labog Jr.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Picop Resources Inc.** were Leonardo Siguion-Reyna, Joost Pekelharing, Teodoro Bernardino, Eleanore Gutierrez, Roberto Atendido, Michael Bernardino, Ramon Montano, Ramon Ang, Pedrito Aragon, Louis Coson and Alfonso Cruz Jr.

* * *

SOLID Group Inc. purchased 2.47 million of its shares at P0.50 per share. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Monday, July 2, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5	5	4.9	5	136,000
Banco Filipino Sav & Mort	100	100	100	100	1,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	72.5	72.5	70	70	516,800
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	36.5	37	34	34	160,000
First E-Bank Corp.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	5,000
Global Business Bank Inc.	84	85	84	85	718,100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	205	207	199	200	220,800
Philippine National Bank	43.5	44	43.5	44	37,700
Security Bank Corp.	21	21.25	20	21	37,100
Union Bank of the Phil.	26	26	26	26	10,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Filipino Fund Inc	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	100,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	250	250	240	248	460
Manulife Financial Corp.	1385	1415	1385	1415	6,240
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1190	1220	1190	1220	34,750
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	6,100
Globe Telecom Inc.	675	675	675	675	1,100
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.036	0.036	0.036	0.036	500,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	42,490,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	735	735	725	730	39,010
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.038	0.039	0.038	0.038	28,400,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	38	38	37.5	37.5	3,900
Manila Electric Co. B	55	55.5	54.5	55	446,200
Petron Corp.	2.24	2.24	2.06	2.08	6,893,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.4	2.42	2.36	2.42	2,522,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	20,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATEDPRODUC TS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	450,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	7.2	7.3	7.2	7.3	8,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.58	0.63	0.58	0.59	1,670,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	55,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	2,070,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.08	2.08	45,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	4.45	4.45	4.2	4.2	359,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.25	13.5	110,100
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	14,500
RFM Corp.	1.66	1.68	1.62	1.62	1,432,000
San Miguel Corp. A	41	41	40.5	41	11,600
San Miguel Corp. B	47	47	46.5	47	290,300
Universal Robina Corp.	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	169,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.86	0.94	0.84	0.94	1,490,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.88	0.96	0.88	0.91	30,000
Ayala Corp.	7	7	7	7	6,538,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	2,150,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	1.24	1.28	1.24	1.28	1,895,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.64	1.76	1.64	1.72	12,707,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	2,150,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	700,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	250,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	29	29	28	28	634,600
Global Equities Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	20,000
Ionics Inc.	11	11	11	11	98,400
Ipeople Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.1	1.1	63,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2	2.04	1.98	1.98	590,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.4	1.42	1.4	1.42	200,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.73	0.73	2,170,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.46	0.47	0.46	0.47	600,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	1,150,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	20,000
Jardine Davies Inc.	15	15	15	15	490,500
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	2,000
Music Corp.	1.96	1.96	1.96	1.96	22,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	15	15	15	15	2,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	150,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.44	0.44	0.43	0.43	920,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.52	0.55	3,530,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	60,000
Philippine Racing Club	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	84,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	495	495	495	495	1,900
Equitable PCI Bank-War	1.92	1.92	1.9	1.9	30,000
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	660	665	660	665	3,130
Jollibee Warrants	13	13	13	13	90,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.003	0.003	0.0028	0.0028	67,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	700
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.028	0.029	0.027	0.028	63,900,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.3	5.3	5.1	5.1	1,542,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.2	0.2	550,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.25	1,820,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.29	770,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	1,390,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.24	2.26	2.22	2.24	7,678,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	3,740,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.25	1,680,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.22	0.26	0.2	0.25	620,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.2	11,160,000
Mining					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	22,000,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	28,000,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	3,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	40,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.6	3	2.6	2.9	74,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.055	0.0575	0.055	0.0575	97,300,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines B	0.055	0.0575	0.055	0.0575	5,200,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.17	0.175	0.17	0.17	270,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	40,000
Omico Corp.	0.0048	0.0048	0.0046	0.0046	
147,000,000					
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	1,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	230,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.42	0.42	0.4	0.41	1,330,000
Oil					
Imperial Res.	0.019	0.02	0.018	0.02	4,100,000
South China Resources Inc	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	50,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	1,983,950	201,827,200.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	257,848,240	236,023,710.00
PRO	30,950,000	96,977,860.00
Mining	305,484,000	7,726,500.00
OIL	4,150,000	85,000.00
GRAND TOTALS:	600,416,190	542,640,270.00

	AVERAGES
Banks & Fin Svc	558.22 DOWN 16.04
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,989.59 DOWN 17.64
PRO	521.06 DOWN 9.08
Mining	1,378.58 DOWN 29.43
OIL	1.45 UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	787.91 UP 6.75
Composite	1,395.79 DOWN 14.28

NO. OF ADVANCES: 20; NO. OF DECLINES: 34; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 47; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 101; NO. OF TRADES: 2,840

CURRENCIES

July 2, 2001 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency In US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.176471	1.000000	52.4280
Japan	Yen	0.009436	0.008021	0.4205
United Kingdom	Pound	1.666000	1.416100	74.2433
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.150841	0.128215	6.7221
Switzerland	Franc	0.656146	0.557724	29.2404
Canada	Dollar	0.777575	0.660939	34.6517
Singapore	Dollar	0.645348	0.548546	28.7592
Australia	Dollar	0.599751	0.509788	26.7272
Bahrain	Dinar	3.120778	2.652661	139.0737
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.313700	0.266645	13.9797
Brunei	Dollar	0.643831	0.547256	28.6915
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000104	0.000088	0.0046
Thailand	Baht	0.026011	0.022109	1.1591
UAE	Dirham	0.320328	0.272279	14.2750
Korea	Won	0.000906	0.000770	0.0404
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.850000	44.5638
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.434598	22.7851
France	Franc	0.152450	0.129582	6.7937
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.385713	20.2222
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.061772	3.2386
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.021071	1.1047
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000439	0.0230
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.142960	7.4951
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.00424	0.2223
Spain	Peseta	0.006011	0.005109	0.2679
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.021071	1.1047
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.079277	56.5843

DECEPTION

Philcemcor stimulating import surge–PCA

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

THE PHILIPPINE Constructors Association Inc. has accused local cement manufacturers of stimulating a surge in cement imports from Indonesia to bolster their case against Taiwan Cement Corp.

PCA president Justo Manalo said the local cement industry engaged in a "cooperative strategic effort to contrive an import surge in cement" to force the government's hand in slapping punitive tariff measures or import quotas to increase prices.

In a letter to Philippine Cement Manufacturers Corp. president Magdaleno Albarracin, Manalo said the massive cement imports from Indonesia came from factories controlled by parent companies of local cement players.

Manalo, however, did not name the culprits.

The "Big 4" cement players of the world—the Holderbank group of Switzerland, Mexico's Cemex, Lafarge of France and UK firm Blue Circle—have controlled more than 80 percent of the local market through mergers and acquisitions over the last 3 years.

Last month, Philcemcor reported that cement imports had doubled their market share from 10 percent last year to more than 20 percent this year due to alleged dumping or sale of cement below market price.

Philcemcor noted that Indonesia had emerged as a major source of cement imports by surpassing Taiwan's shipments last month.

Manalo said while the PCA took a "non-belligerent" position on the industry's recent across-the-board 30-percent increase in prices, it would take a "hard-line position" against Philcemcor's move to impose anti-dumping duties on Taiwan cement under the Safeguard Measures Act.

The Department of Trade and Industry is currently holding a preliminary investigation on Philcemcor's allegation that Taiwan is dumping its excess capacity into the country, which has kept cement prices below production levels.

Manalo claimed that this deceptive move was meant to push prices of cement to more than P200 per bag from P134 per bag to enable the foreign cement companies to recover their acquisition costs in 1998.

He said local cement firms were selling cement at P134 per bag or $67 per ton, which was substantially bigger than the worldwide average of $16 to $20 per ton cost of cement.

Manalo warned that if the DTI sided with Philcemcor on the issue and impose a 40-percent duty on imported cement, cement prices would rise to P200 per bag, which "is inimical to the interest of Filipino consumers and the economy."

Former investment banker to head new energy agency

BY RONNEL W. DOMINGO

ENERGY Secretary Vince Perez announced yesterday the appointment of investment banker Edgardo del Fonso as president of the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (Psalm).

Before his appointment, Del Fonso was managing director of Bancommerce Investment Corp., president of Belle Jai Alai Corp. and chair of Systema Convergence.

The Harvard University graduate was also director of several corporations.

As head of Psalm, Del Fonso will manage the sale and privatization of National Power Corp.'s power generating assets, real estate and other disposable assets, as well as its contracts with independent power producers.

As mandated by the Electric Power Industry Reform Act, Psalm will also assume the state firm's outstanding financial obligations that arose from loans, bonds, securities and other forms of debts.

Before joining Bancommerce, Del Fonso also served as chief financial officer of Philippine Airlines and then of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

From 1986 to 1988, he was a finance undersecretary who headed the technical committee on privatization.

Moreover, the Makati Business Club member held different positions in the Philippine National Oil Co.

In a related matter, Asisclo Gonzaga, Napocor executive vice president and chief operating officer, was appointed president of National Transmission Corp.

Gonzaga had been with Napocor since 1965 where he rose from the ranks starting as a cadet engineer at the Ma. Cristina Hydro Electric Plant.

Last week, Perez said Transco should be the first on the auction block before Napocor's generating assets.

"I think it will make the generation companies' sale attractive if the buyers know who will manage the Transco," he said.

For his part, Gonzaga said the government should chalk up at most $2.7 billion from the sale of Transco.

He said this was a working target although "it will depend on the prospective buyers who would surely bargain."

He added that the government might either sell Transco outright or enter into a 25-year concession contract.

Transco has yet to be transferred to Psalm.

Metro Pacific sets plan to cut debts

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

PROPERTY developer Metro Pacific Corp. is embarking on a comprehensive strategy to trim its P10.5-billion outstanding debts.

This developed as market analysts said restructuring debts would be the company's biggest challenge this year.

In a news briefing yesterday, Metro Pacific president Ricardo Pascua said a portion of the proceeds from the sale of its stake in the northern central business district of the Bonifacio Global City would be used to pay the company's debts.

Pascua said Metro Pacific had hoped to bid out the property, consisting of 18.9 hectares of land, by September. The sale would allow Metro Pacific to free up more resources for the development of the rest of the global city.

"A lot of our debt is maturing in the next 12 months, so we're now talking to creditors and undertaking identification of assets," Pascua said.

"There are enough assets to be able to handle the debts. It's just that we have to restructure, sell assets and liquefy so that the debt structure is matched by assets," he said.

Last week, Metro Pacific announced that its subsidiary, Bonifacio Land Corp., was selling its development rights in the northern central business district to sustain earlier developments in the Global City.

Under the strategy, Fort Bonifacio Development Corp., the joint venture between Bonifacio Land and state-controlled Bases Conversion Development Authority will inject the 18.9-hectare property into a new company in exchange for shares. Bonifacio Land will then sell its 55-percent stake in the new company to a new investor.

Pascua said at least one big local property developer had expressed interest to bid for the stake.

The other groups that participated in the 1995 bidding for the Fort Bonifacio project were expected to take a look at the sale. These included the Ayala, Gokongwei and Sy groups, and the Armed Forces of the Philippines-Retirement Service and Benefits System.

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MANILA POLO	4,000,000	MT. MALARAYAT "C"	Call now!
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Gov't unlikely to meet growth targets, says Landbank prexy

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE HEAD of Land Bank of the Philippines said yesterday the government was unlikely to meet its growth targets this year.

Landbank president Margarito Teves, an economist and a former lawmaker, predicted a 2.6- to 3-percent growth in gross domestic product—the total final value of all goods and services produced in a nation's economy over a given period of time, usually a year, excluding foreign income—this year.

The GDP growth rate is a primary indicator of the state of a country's economy.

The Development Budget Coordinating Council expects GDP to grow by 3.3 to 3.8 percent this year, a level that economists and analysts believe to be "too optimistic."

"The government poses targets and this is what it wants to attain, while economists do forecasts and these are likely to happen," Teves, former head a of Think Tank Inc., told reporters.

Teves said among the spoilers to the government's growth targets were higher oil prices, a bigger unemployment figure and a huge fiscal deficit. These, he said, could prevent a sustained economic recovery.

He added that foreign investors remained wary of placing their money in the Philippines.

Teves said the Macapagal administration was struggling with domestic and external problems that were weighing down on the economy.

"(Former President Joseph) Estrada was even luckier because, even if there was a huge deficit, he had no external factors, like a US economic slowdown, to contend with," he said.

The Macapagal administration is also dealing with a huge budget deficit. It has been working on a tight budget to keep its deficit below P145 billion by year's end.

The tighter budget has prevented the government from pump-priming the economy.

The new administration is also coping with an economic slowdown in the United States and Japan, the country's major trading partners.

The United States and Japan account for nearly half the Philippines' exports that, in turn, make up about 20 percent of GDP.

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NTC to tighten rules vs oversubscription

BY ABIGAIL L. HO

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission has decided to apply tougher measures to prevent telecommunication companies from taking in subscribers beyond their networks' capacity.

NTC chief Eliseo Rio said the commission was revising its benchmark for the "grade of service" that telecommunication companies should meet.

"Grade of service" is determined by the number of successful calls, or calls that actually make it through to the other party without getting dropped or getting a busy signal.

The benchmark is currently pegged at 7 percent for mobile phone companies and 5 percent for landline operators. This means that out of 100 calls made through a cellular phone, only seven should fail; for each 100 calls made through a landline, only five should fail.

Rio said the NTC would retain its current landline benchmark, but would set a new benchmark of only 5 percent for cellular phone operators, especially with the rapid subscriber base growth mobile phone firms were enjoying.

"The telecommunications companies have agreed on this already. We'll have one last meeting by mid-July to finalize things," Rio said.

As for how this grade of service was actually measured, Rio said the NTC was conducting quarterly check-ups of each telecommunications company.

"We have our own equipment for measuring this. We get the statistics on how many per one thousand calls give a busy signal," he said.

The next inspection will be done as soon as the new benchmark is set.

Companies that do not meet the NTC's benchmark will be banned from selling additional SIM (subscriber identification module) packs or from getting more subscribers until they improve their grade of service.

SEC seeks credit ring agreement this week

BY ELENA R. TORRIJOS

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has ordered the Philippine Stock Exchange to submit tomorrow a final version of a "credit ring" agreement requiring brokers and dealers to cover for possible collateral shortfalls when trading.

Under the proposed credit ring agreement, members of the PSE and its clearing arm, the Securities Clearing Corp. of the Philippines, will contribute pro-rata the amount of "net negative exposures" of failing brokers exceeding P10 million.

The SCCP has already submitted one version, but the SEC found possible loopholes in it.

The commission earlier approved the SCCP's request that all clearing members with net negative exposures amounting to P1 million or below be exempted from a required daily collateral collection under the mark to market collateral deposit system.

The exemption, however, was subject to the condition that the SCCP, through a one-time contribution by its members or by the PSE on behalf of its members, add to the Clearing and Trade Guarantee Fund P10 million for the sole purpose of covering the aggregate net negative exposures of members whose computed individual exposure were less than P1 million.

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REAL ESTATE

CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor

Old buildings need upgrading to rival new 'brainy' ones

BY TESSA R. SALAZAR

INTELLIGENCE or beauty?

Sounds like a beauty pageant, but new buildings in the country seem to possess both. The emergence of technology-equipped buildings in urban centers has brought pressure on owners of 15-year-old and above buildings that have the brawns (probably the beauty as well), but not necessarily the brains. Suddenly, competition has become stiffer.

So, how does one cope with such building competition and the preference of tenants to dwell and do business in an "intelligent" building?

Demolishing old buildings to make way for new ones need not be an option. For German firm Siemens Building Technologies, which is currently in the refurbishment of buildings in the Philippines, refurbishing an old building is far cheaper than putting up a new structure. During a press briefing, SBT stressed it sees a market in the country, which it estimated as having 80 percent of buildings that are not new. SBT president and CEO Borys Priadko said the Philippines has a market that is not yet "mature."

Among Priadko's suggestions to make old buildings competitive are to make these structures "eco-efficient" to be at par with world building standards. He added that these should be refurbished with environmental controls to utilize electricity more efficiently, and to provide them with better temperature control and air quality so these structures could become safer and healthier to stay in for tenants.

Priadko hopes the Philippine economy would experience a turnaround, despite predictions of no upswings in the real estate and construction industry in the next 12 months. He said, however, that SBT still believes in the Philippine construction market's potential

"There's a large majority of your buildings here that's not been upgraded. For this to become competitive in the next few years, they're all going to have to be upgraded. So we see the potential as there are more pressures for the buildings to upgrade," he said.

SBT's focus, apart from commercial establishments, includes airports, hotels, healthcare facilities, industrial structures, laboratories and clean rooms, shopping centers, sporting facilities, schools, pharmaceutical plants and data centers.

Among SBT's projects were the Naia domestic terminal and the Pacific Star Building. Other projects were the Olympic Stadium Complex in Australia, the Palace of the Golden Horses in Malaysia, Singapore University, Hyatt Hotels and the Mass Transport Railway System of Taiwan.

SBT also decided to put its multiple business units under one roof—The Pilgrim Building in Makati—a not-so-new building, which by now is technology equipped. SBT's building automation division and services include solutions and lighting control as well as heating, ventilating and air-conditioning systems—what is known as HVAC. It also handles access control, intrusion, video surveillance and danger management systems. Its fire safety systems also include fire detection, gas detection, extinguishing and evacuation.

CREEKSIDE FACELIFT

The Makati Creekside Mall recently got a facelift to give it a fresh look. The building, which turns 14 years old this month offers one of the most competitive rates in commercial space leases in the Makati business district. This 2,212-square-meter, five-story edifice houses establishments such as restaurants, entertainment outlets, and media production studios and accessible to all points in the metropolis. Located on Amorsolo Street, it has sufficient parking slots and offers valet services to tenants and customers.

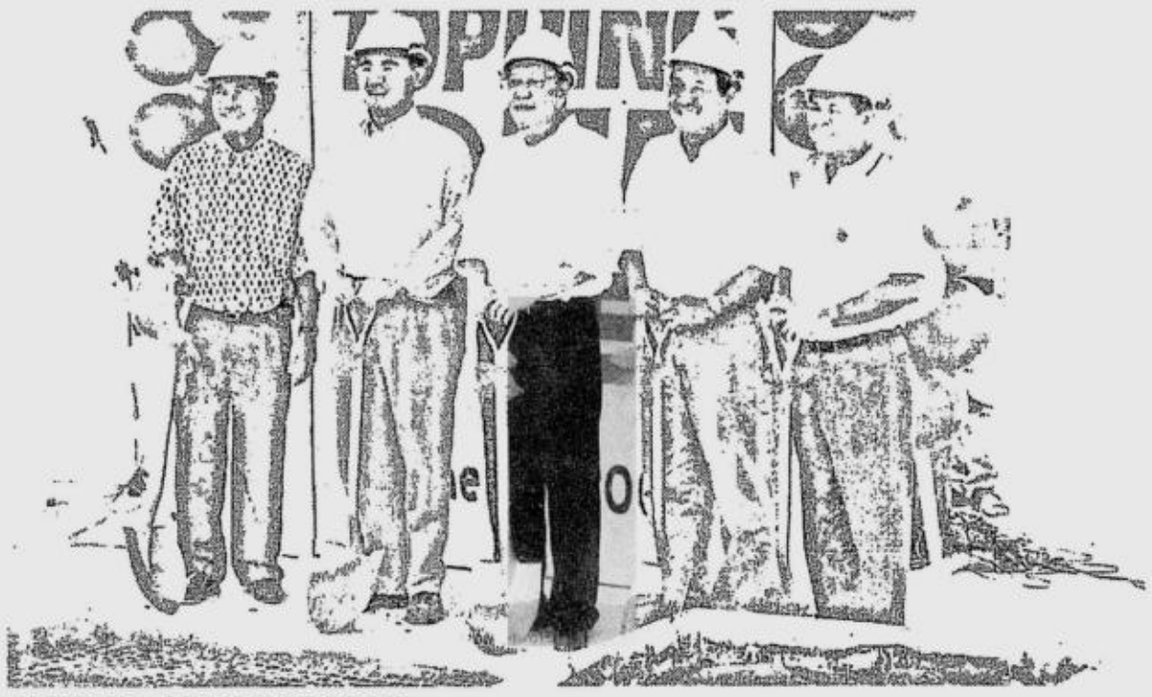
New 40-story condo rises in Legazpi Village

MORE than 30,000 square meters of premium high-rise space will soon be available on Rada Street in Legazpi Village, a short walking distance from Greenbelt Mall overlooking Legazpi Park, as the launch of a 40-story condominium project draws near.

This new Ayala Land venture consists mostly of studios, one-bedroom and two-bedroom units, and some three-bedroom units. Commercial units will be put on the ground floor.

All 370 units will be designed based on Ayala Land's highest standards of quality and property management. These units are ideal for both investors and end-users.

Amenities and facilities include a swimming pool, a social hall, landscaped areas with water features, an air-conditioned lobby, space for day care, play area and a gym. Four elevators will service the residents.



TOPPING OFF CEREMONIES

Robinsons Land Corp., one of the country's largest and most dynamic real estate firms today, recently held the topping off rites of its 3rd mall in the Visayas, the Robinsons Place Iloilo. With the mall structurally complete, Robinsons Place Iloilo is targeted to open by the last quarter of this year. It will be a 3-level shopping mall with over 200 shops, dining outlets, entertainment facilities and service centers. From left are engineer Dennis Abcede, construction manager, DA Abcede and Associates; Frederick D. Go, RLC senior vice president; engineer Joe San Buenaventura, engineering division manager, World Engineering; architect Nicky G. Villanueva, RLC vice president for corporate property planning; and architect William V. Coscolluela, principal architect, WVCA.

9 urban poor housing sites listed for P49-M financing

NINE housing sites being purchased by their respective community associations of informal dwellers have received a P49.1-million funding allocation from the National Home Mortgage Finance Corp. last month under its community mortgage program (CMP) to assure their land tenure security on the said properties.

The housing sites have also been issued letters of guarantee cover by the NHMFC to assure landowner-sellers of the properties that the CMP loan proceeds will be released as payment for the housing sites upon compliance with the loan requirements, according to NHMFC president Angelico T. Salud.

The proposed sites for urban poor housing lined up for CMP financing were earlier accredited, evaluated and inspected prior to the approval last month of the letters of guarantee by the NHMFC board of directors, chaired by Secretary Michael T. Defensor, concurrent presidential housing adviser and chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council.

Comprising a total of 1,353 family beneficiaries, the housing sites and their corresponding approved CMP loan values include Christian Homeowners Association (HOA) Inc., P300,300; Project 3, Barangay 26 Gingoog City Urban Poor, P7.19-million; Kamonsil HOA Inc., P245,000; Tabing-Ilog Nangka HOA, P9.95-million;

J.M. Inc., P11.29-million; Samahang Pagkakaisa sa Abot-Kaya HOA Inc., P6.46-million; Bayanihan HOA of Salinas Bacoor Inc., P4.58-million; Sama-samang Babalikat sa Lupang Pangako Inc. (Robles Property), P140,000; and Victory Heights HOA Inc., Phase 1, P8.96-million.

The financing of the project sites is the contribution of the NHMFC to the overall housing initiatives of Defensor to fast-track the security of land and housing tenure for the informal settlers under the administration of President Macapagal.

ANOTHER HOUSING SITE

Muntinlupa Mayor Jaime Fresnedi (right) shares light moments with project engineer Joseph Dominia, a housing site coordinator, during an ocular inspection of the new housing project of the city government located at the Soldier's Hills, Barangay Putatan. The project, which is in coordination with the National Housing Authority, is one of the many low-cost housing projects of the administration to address the problems of the poor on houses.

BCI Asia online services promotes growth of construction industry

BUILDING and Construction Interchange (BCI) Asia's project leads can now be reached through its online construction reports at its website address www.bciasia.com.

According to BCI Asia's country manager JJ Fernandez, this advancement will greatly reinforce their ultimate goal of promoting the growth of the construction industry in the Philippines.

Through e-bulletin, BCI Asia will be more effective in providing construction project information to their clients which will include building products' suppliers, contractors, subcontractors, designers and consultants.

Said Fernandez: "This will create a level playing field among contractors. Contract bidding using the information from the BCI online service will surely result to higher quality projects, lower development cost. It is our intention to increase the probability of more projects getting off the ground."

In this website, project leads enable construction suppliers and contractors to introduce their product to key decision-makers early enough in the process to have the product specified. This will also enable them to have a constant flow of sales opportunities.

Aside from the future construction activities, e-bulletin provides information on project scope, estimated cost, construction timetable and key contact details that are vital for bidding a contract.

Meanwhile, architect Joseph Palafox of Line Art Design finds an easy access to suppliers of building materials and consultants subscribing. Palafox said that BCI Asia's online report is aggressive as far as trying to reach out to potential clients which will eventually open up lines of communication between users and sellers of building projects and systems.

BCI Asia, the market leader in construction information started reporting in 1993. This was conceived in answer to the needs of contractors for value information, Fernandez said.

BCI Asia, a nominee for the Asian Innovation Awards by the Far Eastern Review in 1999, is servicing six major cities in the Asia Pacific that include Manila, Singapore, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta and Bangkok. BCI also has an office in Sydney, Australia.

Interested contractors, subcontractors, suppliers, designers and consultants may visit the website and avail of the online service.

Filinvest introduces new model of Casa Cielo home series in Antipolo City

REAL estate developer Filinvest Land Inc. recently unveiled Diana, its latest Casa Cielo housing series in its rapidly developing township project of Filinvest East County in Antipolo City.

In simple rites held recently at the Mission Hills community of Filinvest East County, company officers present for the groundbreaking were FLI president Joseph M. Yap, consultant Rollie T. Manalili, FLI vice chair Andrew Gotianun Jr. and engineer Winnie Lim.

Blending indoor and outdoor living within its 298-square-meter usable floor plan, Diana's bigger floor area offers more value at less cost. This also allows the homeowner the choice for vertical expansion, adding more options to create more bedrooms or to have a viewing deck, depending on one's lifestyle needs. Whether as a bungalow or a two-story home, Diana gives you value for your money and flexibility, making for a classic home that can easily adapt to the changing times.

Designed along Mediterranean architecture, the Diana model home offers a timeless classic that serves as the perfect backdrop to your chosen lifestyle. Its charms are perfectly complemented by Mission Hill's relaxing scenery and placid grounds. A well-planned themed community located in the growing township of Filinvest East County in Antipolo City, its immaculately groomed parks are embellished with benches, wide winding roads and generously sized lot parcels, making you glad to come home every time. Combining the best of all worlds in one haven, Filinvest East County brings together three world-class communities—Highlands Pointe, Mission Hills and Wood Vale—into one master-planned enclave.

The Casa Cielo model homes were unveiled in simultaneous open houses at the Filinvest East County in Antipolo City; at Park Spring in San Pedro, Laguna; and in Mountain View at Capitol Hills, Quezon City.

FIGARO OPENS IN ORTIGAS BUSINESS DISTRICT

Commercial buildings now offer ground floor spaces to coffee shops and restaurants as an amenity for their tenants. The latest to open in the Ortigas Business District is Figaro Coffee Co. Open from 7 a.m. to midnight, Figaro caters to the businessmen and residents in the area of Emerald Avenue.

Accreditation of construction arbitrators scheduled July 6

THE CONSTRUCTION Industry Arbitration Commission (Ciac) will accredit its fourth batch of construction arbitrators on July 6 at the Grand Ballroom of New World Renaissance International Hotel, Makati Avenue, Makati City. The 16 arbitrators will take their oaths of office before Supreme Court Associate Justice Jose C. Vitug.

The 4th batch of trainees is composed of selected nominees of various professional organizations who successfully completed the 80-hour intensive training program on construction arbitration. The nominee-participants are lawyer Federico Y. Alikpala, managing partner, Lawyers Group; architect Armando N. Alli, partner and business manager, DACY Architects/Planner Co.; engineer Danilo T. Andrada, president, IMAX Construction Management and Consultancy Inc.; lawyer Ma. Clara B. Asuncion, senior associate, Syquia Law Offices; architect Antonio Y. Balde, principal, Balde and Associates, Dean of Architecture, Columban College; engineer Ricardo S. Basa, president, DCCD Engineering Corp.;

Lawyer Manuel M. Cosico, partner, Romulo Mabanta Buenaventura, Sayoc and Delos Angeles Law Offices; engineer Romeo C. David, vice president, Proconsult Inc.; architect Edilberto Florentino, principal, E.F. Florentino, E.C Florentino & Associates; engineer Antonio I. Goco, president, Proconsult Inc.; lawyer Daphne T. Jereza, junior partner, Picazo Buyco Tan & Fider Law Offices; engineer Vicente B. Lopez, president, VBL Infrastructure Project Management Consultancy; lawyer Paulino M. Noto, senior manager, Proconsult Inc.; architect Felicitas A. Pio-Roda, president and CEO, Asian Technicon Managers & Consultants Inc.; engineer Ricardo B. San Juan, business developer, LKG Group; and Leandro A Viloria, principal, UP Konsult.

The members of the training faculty who have been previously accredited as construction arbitrators include lawyers Alfredo F. Tadiar, lecturer on CIAC Rules of Procedure; Custodio O. Parlade, lecturer on Case Handling Problems/Solutions and Mediation; Victor P. Lazatin, lecturer on Applicable Rules of Procedure in Civil Actions, and Revised Rules of Court: Construction and Suppletory Effect; former Judge Salvador C. Ceguera, lecturer on Ethics/Code of Conduct of the Construction Arbitrators; Dr. Ernesto S. de Castro, lecturer on Construction Disputes in General, Substantive and Procedural Aspects of Arbitration Disputes: An Overview, and the Ciac and Construction Disputes; Felisberto G.L. Reyes, lecturer on Introduction to the Construction Work Process, Rights and Authority, Relationships, Obligations and Responsibilities of Key Persons and Professionals, and Monitoring and Control Mechanism; and Eliseo I, Evangelista lecturer on Selected Special Laws: Basic Principles.

Lawyers Jose Grapilon, former Integrated Bar of the Philippines president, and Francis ED. Lim, senior partner of Accra Law were also invited to lecture during the training.

Pag-Ibig Fund seeks Creba help to push housing program

PRESIDENT and chief executive officer Manuel C. Crisostomo of the Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-Ibig Fund) has called on members of the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Associations (Creba) as "our partners in the private sector" to assist in "enabling us to make home acquisition affordable to Pag-Ibig members and make housing finance sustainable."

Crisostomo spoke before the Creba at its 6th monthly business meeting presided by lawyer Manuel M. Serrano last Thursday at the Hotel Intercontinental in Makati City. A career executive officer (Ceso), Crisostomo has served Pag-Ibig Fund in various positions for the last 16 years.

"We are confident," the Pag-Ibig chief said, "that our continuing dialogue and cooperation, along with the wholehearted support of President Macapagal and Secretary Defensor, can only result in the fulfillment of our shared vision." Secretary Michael Defensor is chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council and presidential adviser on housing.

As its major advocacy, Creba has packaged a comprehensive home finance system with a large pool of funds to respond to the housing needs of both members and nonmembers of the Pag-Ibig Fund, Social Security System and the Government Service Insurance System. It seeks primary and secondary home mortgage financing to undertake a continuing and viable system aimed at providing some 400,000 housing units yearly, especially for the low-income and underprivileged homeless Filipinos.

CRISOSTOMO (with microphone) responds to questions during the Creba monthly business meeting at the Hotel Intercontinental. With him, from left, are lawyer Serrano; Rep. Eduardo C. Zialcita (Parañaque City), Creba executive vice president; lawyer Luis B. Pangilinan Jr., VP for external affairs, Fort Bonifacio Development Corp. and overall chair, Creba sports-fellowship committee.

Creba has been calling on the government to adopt this comprehensive approach to housing finance and mount an aggressive and systematic housing program amid an increasing backlog of housing units. The shortage is now estimated at 4.5 million units nationwide.

During a recent meeting between President Macapagal and business leaders, Creba national president Charlie V. Goyareb had reiterated the chamber's call for a "total, systematic and long-term approach" to the crisis of homelessness.

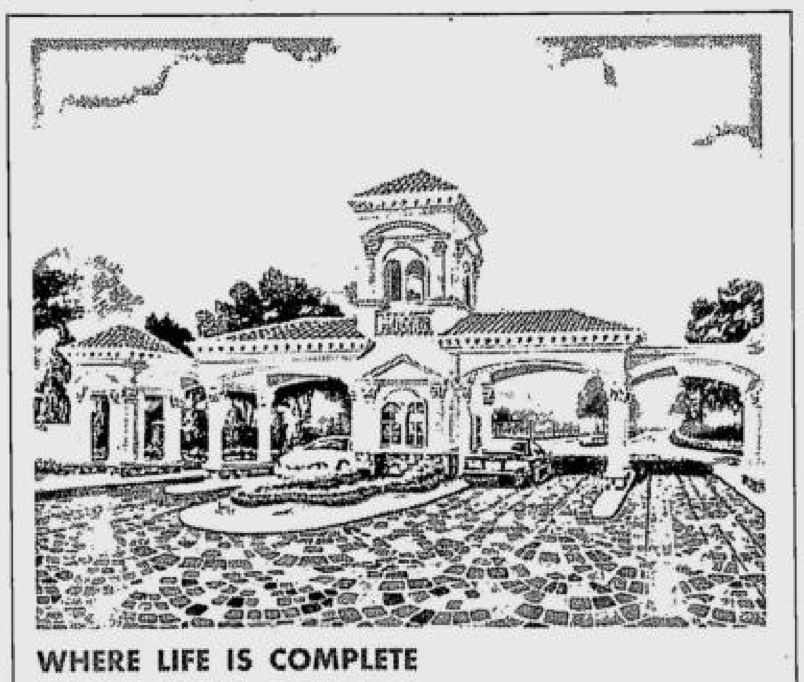
Last month, Creba signed an agreement with National Housing Authority general manager Edgardo D. Pamintuan for Creba members to undertake joint-venture socialized housing projects with the NHA for lower-income families. Pamintuan viewed the NHA-Creba agreement as part of the President's "healing mission" under the government's program for the poor and the underprivileged sector.

In his speech, Crisostomo said Pag-Ibig has forged housing agreement with the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Philippine National Police and the local government units of Bataan and Pasig as well as the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority. The pension fund has also enlisted five developers to carry out the DILG-PNP housing program for 45,000 units under a P4.2-million sinking fund.

Pag-Ibig Fund has also put up a special housing loan facility for overseas Filipino workers and a housing loan program for middle-income members, and revived the direct developmental loan program for developers, and the Pag-Ibig City Program to provide a ready inventory of completed quality housing units at more affordable prices.

Crisostomo informed Creba the city program will lower project financing costs for participating companies seeking housing for their workers as a joint venture with Pag-Ibig, providing faster investment turnaround. This, he said, will enable developers to increase their housing production and thus lower housing packages for applicants.

Pag-Ibig is also aggressively promoting its overseas program's housing loan benefits for overseas workers with maximum loan upgraded from P500,000 to P2 million. The agency is planning a marketing tie-up with developers in selling housing inventories to these workers. Pag-Ibig overseas offices will do the brokering and marketing for the accredited developers.



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Veka products are tested by international authorities to ensure compliance with relevant standards which earned for the company the honor of a DINS ISO 9001 certification.

Crown Asia gives all-out to brokers

FOR THIS wife and mother, her lifestyle and her home were the foundation of how she established herself as one of the top brokers for Crown Asia.

Liza Schneider is the first to admit that she has a certain partiality toward Crown Asia's properties having personally experienced what it is like to be a client of this top developer of master-planned subdivisions.

The Schneiders have a modest home in Cottonwood Heights, one of the premiere subdivisions of Crown Asia in the fast-growing city of Antipolo. Cottonwood Heights is master-planned to have an American-countryside ambience and lifestyle. Its location and the masterful blending of the subdivision's development with the natural beauty of the Antipolo countryside assure virtually pollution-free surroundings.

As she talks to clients, Schneider inevitably starts relating the life they live. "Being a resident of Cottonwood Heights, I could vouch for the quality of the houses," Liza says, noting that because they live in the same subdivision as the houses and lots they were selling, it was easier to connect with their clients.

SCHNEIDER

Liza, a mother of two, said that aside from the obvious advantage of using their personal experiences when they talk to clients, she also points out the all-out support that Crown Asia gives to its sales network.

Crown Asia has carefully thought through the different levels and types of support for their business partners. As the property firm's officials point out that Crown Asia's efforts, although crucial for the sales network to achieve a measure of success, are not the primary reasons for this accomplishment.

"To succeed in selling real estate you will need the marketing support of your developer," stresses Crown Asia chief operating officer Edgardo G. Santos. But, he further adds, " the bottom line is the effort and hard work and that personal touch that our sales managers, property consultants and business managers put in."

"We are staffed with young dynamic and talented people who have embraced our ethic of working hard and long hours to make sure our sales networks are fully assisted. This in turn inspires our business partners to work even harder," says Santos.

When she began selling Crown Asia's houses and lots, Schneider was a government employee. She has since resigned from her job and is now selling full-time. "It is not only financially rewarding but also professionally fulfilling because of that sense of accomplishment in what you do."

Liza said she and her supportive husband Sidney share in the work when it comes to selling. "We share inputs and this allows us to remain focused and professional in what we do."

Crown Asia's marketing endeavors have also helped them sell more and she has only praises for the realty developer's employees who are more than willing to help their sellers. Another aspect that has helped Crown Asia's business partners is the holding of regular selling and marketing seminars organized by the property developer as part of its efforts to spur sales.

Liza says the support of Crown Asia has allowed them the luxury of being able to manage their own hours and "believe it or not gives us more time for ourselves and our children."

Those who wish to venture on their own in real estate sales, Schneider says, have to start small "like I did and it helps when you get family and friends to give you word of mouth advertising and most of all, know the property you are selling, In my case, since we like our home in Cottonwood Heights, our experiences were our best points for selling.

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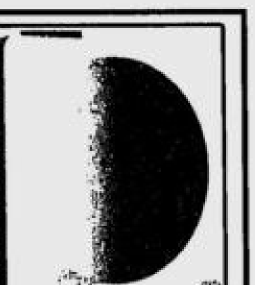

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AUCTION SALE

MARA Pawnshop Br. of 2202 M. Roxas cor. Pedro Gil Sta. Ana Manila. Auction Sale on July 9, 2001, Monday, at 2:30 in the afternoon respectively, Feb. 13-Mar. 9, 2001.
Sons of J. Lanuza, Auctioneer.

MARA PAWNSHOP I, II, II, IV and Comembo Br. of Makati City, Auction Sale on July 9, 2001, Monday at 10:30, 11:30, 1:30, 12:30 and 8:30 in the morning and on the afternoon. Respectively Feb. 13- Mar. 9, 2001.
Sons of J. Lanuza, Auctioneer.R

PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

MI MARA Pawnshop of 251 Quirino Ave. Baclaran Paranaque M.M. Auction Sale on July 9, 2001, Monday at 4:00 in the afternoon. Respectively, Feb. 13-Mar. 9, 2001.
Sons of J. Lanuza, Auctioneer.

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May the most Sacred Heart of Jesus be praised, blessed, loved, adored and glorified throughout the whole world now and forever. Amen.
Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. Pray for us.
St. Jude, worker of miracles, helper for the helpless, pray for us.
Say nine times a day for nine days. Prayer will be answered by the eighth day, it has never failed.
Thank you very much, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Jude, for favor granted.

THANK YOU SACRED HEART OF JESUS AND IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

SECOND (2nd) INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID FOR THE SUPPLY, DELIVERY AND ASSEMBLY OF THE FOLLOWING:

a. Contract Package No. 13 : Four (4)-Drawer Lateral Files (Stand Alone) with Overhead File Cabinet, Four (4)-Drawer Lateral Files (Stand Alone) without Overhead Cabinet, Lateral Files (On Tracks with Fixed File Cabinet) and Open File Shelves;
b. Contract Package No. 13A : File Compactors; and
c. Contract Package No. 13B : File Cabinet for Maps and Index Cards

All corporations registered with the Philippine Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), with extensive experience in the supply, delivery and assembly of lateral files and compactors for office buildings, are invited to apply for pre-qualification, and bidding for Contract Package Nos. 13, 13A and 13B for the new LBP Headquarters Building in Malate, Manila with the following schedule:

Issuance of Pre-Qualification Form	Pre-Qualification Conference	Issuance of Notices of Pre-qualification/ Pre-disqualification after	Dates of Issuance of Notices of Pre-qualification/ Pre-disqualification	Issuance of Bid Documents	Pre-Bid Conference	Bidding Date
July 5 to 10, 2001 @ 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM	July 13, 2001 @ 10:00 AM	a. Evaluation of Pre-qualification Documents and Brochures	August 1, 2001	August 28, 2001 @ 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM	August 31, 2001 @ 10:00 AM	Sept. 7, 2001 @ 10:00 AM
		b. Evaluation of Displays versus Brochures	August 17, 2001			
		c. Selection of top choices from the displays by Sub-Committee and Special Committee	August 27, 2001			

All Interested Suppliers may obtain the Pre-qualification forms from the LBP Ad Hoc Group Office, c/o Project Management and Engineering Department (PMED), 2F LBP Building III, 315 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City, upon payment of a non-refundable processing fee of P1,400.00 for the new suppliers (those who did not secure the pre-qualification documents during the first invitation), and P700.00 for those who have secured/submitted pre-qualification documents during the first invitation. Only those suppliers who secured the pre-qualification documents shall be eligible to participate in the pre-qualification process.

After the pre-qualification conference, Suppliers shall be given two (2) calendar-days to signify in writing their interest to join the pre-qualification process by accomplishing the proforma Letter of Intent (LOI) included in the pre-qualification forms issued earlier. Attendance to the pre-qualification conference is among the requirements for pre-qualification.

Duly accomplished Pre-qualification Forms shall be submitted to and received at the above-stated office not later than July 20, 2001, 3:00 PM, after which no documents will be accepted. All participating suppliers shall be notified in writing of the results of the pre-qualification.

Only pre-qualified suppliers may secure Bid Documents at the above-stated office/date upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P5,000.00.

Pre-Qualification and Pre-Bid conferences will be held on the above-stated date and time at the FMGSG Conference Room, 2F, LBP Building III, 315 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City.

Bidding shall be conducted using the two (2) envelope system (envelopes "A" and "B") to be submitted to and received not later than 10:00 AM on September 7, 2001 (the Bidding Date). Bidding shall be held at the FMGSG Conference Room, 2F, LBP Building III, 315 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City.

LBP reserves the right to change the date of issuance of bid documents, pre-bid conference and bidding date. Due notice of changes shall however be communicated by LBP to pre-qualified bidders.

LBP likewise reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or formality, assume no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expense/loss that they may incur during the preparation of their bids, and to accept the bid that is most advantageous to the Bank.

(Sgd.) ANTONIO T. HERNANDEZ
Chairman,
Sub-Committee for LBP HQ Building Project

(PDI – July 3, 4 & 5, 2001)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL MEAT INSPECTION COMMISSION
Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. 9247977; 9247980
Telefax No. 9243119

VACANCIES
(In compliance with RA 7041)

6-Director I - SG-25*: Bachelor's degree; 3 years of supervisory experience, Career Service Executive Eligibility (CSEE)/Career Executive Service (CES)

Item No. NMICF-AFMFB-DIR 1-13-1998 (Region VIII);
Item No. NMICF-AFMFB-DIR 1-4-1998 (Region XI);
Item No. NMICF-AFMFB-DIR 1-5-1998 (Region XII);
Item No. NMICF-AFMFB-DIR 1-6-1998 (Region I);
Item No. NMICF-AFMFB-DIR 1-8-1998 (Region II);
Item No. NMICF-AFMFB-DIR 1-9-1998 (Region IV)

Duties and responsibilities — identifies, develops and provides criteria and standard on accreditation of abattoir and meat processing plant; undertakes area surveys necessary in establishing and organizing comprehensive national meat inspection and hygiene system: studies, examines and develops methods and techniques towards a more economical, practical hygienic handling of meat and their products; studies and develops alternatives or improve methods of prolonging the storage life of refrigerated meat and meat products; reviews all scientific papers prepared by technical personnel of the division; and performs such other function as may be required by the Commission.

1-Chief Meat Control Officer - SG-24*: Item No. NMICF-AFMFB-CMCC-1-1998; Doctor of Veterinary Medicine; 4 years in position/s involving management and supervision; 24 hours relevant training in management and supervision; RA 1080.

Duties and responsibilities — plans, programs and supervises meat hygiene, inspection and preservation, abattoir construction, management and operation and post abattoir control (meat and meat markets); follow-up and assesses the implementation of policy guidelines, procedures, rules and regulations and render appropriate reports; coordinates with appropriate agency surveys in relation to the establishments and organization of regional abattoirs and regularly on meat inspected, fees collected, problems encountered and measures taken or recommended.

** As per CSC-MC No. 13, s. 1992 which state that: "Starting January 01, 1995, except for full-fledged lawyers and Doctors of Medicine, and all appointees to division chief position (SG-24) or equivalent rank must possess a masteral degree in addition to the eligibility and experience requirements"*

*****Deadline for submission of application—July 16, 2001***

(PDI – July 3, 2001)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

ERIC YAP SIY

Above person is wanted for violation of **Art. 189 Revised Penal Code** (Unfair Competition) for manufacturing/distributing/selling fake **Sahara Cement Waterproofing Compound** under Criminal Case no. **99-83089** before the **Regional Trial Court of Quezon City** Branch 89. A warrant of arrest has been issued against him. Rewards will be given for any information that will lead to his arrest. There shall be strict confidentiality of the informants identity. Please contact **ISC Tel. No. 658-1371; 660-2916; 658-5751.**

(PDI - July 3, 2001)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that the employment of **Mr. Roman "Roy" Mauricio**, whose picture appears above and whose last known address is Sullera Street Pandaya, Meycauayan, Bulacan, has been terminated for cause by **Carworld, Inc.** Marilao Branch effective March 1998.

Any transaction made by Roman Mauricio on behalf of the company after to the date of the termination of his employment shall not be honored by the company.

(PDI - July 3, 2001)

Republic of the Philippines
Office of the President
Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council
HOUSING AND LAND USE REGULATORY BOARD

INVITATION TO BID

The HOUSING AND LAND USE REGULATORY BOARD (HLURB) invites GIS Application Software Developers to a public bidding for the AUTOMATED LAND USE MONITORING SYSTEM (ALUMS) project.

Application forms for Prequalification/Eligibility and Request for Proposals (RFP) may be secured from the PBAC-ITR Secretariat at the GIS-ITG, Second Floor, HLURB Building, Kalayaan Avenue, Quezon City with Telefax No 434-4168 upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Five Hundred Pesos (PhP500.00).

The deadline of submission of July accomplished Pre-qualification/Eligibility Form shall be on July 20, 2001 at 10:00 AM. The Last Day of submission of proposals shall be on July 20, 2001 at 10:00 AM.

Request for clarification and other inquiries may be addressed to the above address in writing or in person before the deadline of submission of proposals.

HLURB reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive any required formalities in the bids and to accept such bids, which are advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) FRANCISCO L. DAGNALAN
Commissioner and Chairman,
Awards & Contracts Review Committee

(PDI – July 2, 3 & 4, 2001)

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID
Re: SECURITY AND JANITORIAL SERVICES

All interested SECURITY and JANITORIAL AGENCIES, preferably Metro Manila based, are invited to pre-qualify and bid for the provision of Security and Janitorial Services requirements of the Department of Tourism (DOT) and Philippine Tourism Authority (PTA). THIS INVITATION SERVES AS AN EXTENSION OF THE INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID, PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED FOR SECURITY SERVICES IN OCTOBER 2000.

The list of pre-qualification requirements may be obtained from the DOT-PTA Secretariat Room 309, DOT Building, T.M. Kalaw Street, Ermita, Manila from **09 July 2001** until **20 July 2001**. Deadline for submission of pre-qualification documents is on 27 July 2001. Applicants shall be notified of the results of their prequalifications on or before **06 August 2001.**

Bid documents shall be issued to pre-qualified bidders at Room 309, DOT Building from **06 August 2001** until **20 August 2001**, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of THREE HUNDRED PESOS (P300.00).

A pre-bid conference will be held on **28 August 2001** (Tuesday) for Security Services at 2:00 p.m. and on **29 August 2001** (Wednesday) for Janitorial Services at the same time, at the Internal Services (IS) Conference Room (Rm. 307), DOT Building, T.M. Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila. Submission and opening of sealed bids in this regard shall be on **04 September 2001** (Tuesday) for Security Services and on **05 September 2001** (Wednesday) for Janitorial Services, at the same time and venue.

The DOT and PTA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, and/or any part thereof, waive any defect contained therein and accept a bid most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) ASEC. MA. THERESA I. MARTINEZ
Chairperson
Joint DOT-PTA PBAC

(PDI–July 2, 3 & 4, 2001)

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JOSE V. TECSON, SR.

Former President and General Manager of
Transcon and C.T.I.

Passed away in the Grace of Our Lord
on June 30, 2001 at the age of 81.

His loving wife **Nena H. Tecson**; children **Peping** and **Dulce Tecson**, **Nita** and **Manny Pilares**, **Rudy** and **Corrine Tecson**, **Eddie** and **Pamela Tecson**, **Maribel** and **Dennis Sindico**, **Vicky** and **Nandy Jayme**; grandchildren **Joey**, **Rico** and **Jaime**, **Emjay**, **Jayem**, **Jaypee** and **Peejay**, **Randy**, **Raffy**, **Martha** and **Ramon**, **Michael** and **Stephen**, **Dindin**, **DJ**, **Mico** and **Anton**, **Katrina**, **Kristine** and **Katherine**; relatives and friends request the readers to join them in prayer for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the White Plains Chapel, White Plains Subdivision, Quezon City.

Funeral Mass will be held on Thursday, July 5, 2001 at 8:00 AM at the White Plains Chapel. Interment follows at the Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park, Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

POTENCIANO T. ILUSORIO

Peacefully joined our Lord
on June 28, 2001 at the age 88.

The bereaved members of his family, relatives, friends, associates and staff request for your prayers to guide him through his final journey.

His mortal remains were cremated on June 28, 2001 in accordance with his wishes.

Interment will follow after the 10:30 a.m. Requiem Mass at the Baguio Cathedral on July 3, 2001.

Please omit flowers. In lieu of flowers, donations to the Convent of the Most Blessed Sacrament (Pink Sisters, Baguio City) or the Opthalmological Foundation of the Philippines will be appreciated.

The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not be in want,
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil,
for You are with me, Your rod and Your staff, They comfort me...
Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Psalm 23:1,4,6

EDWARD ROBERT C. YU

Died in the grace of our Lord on July 1, 2001
at the age of 54.

His beloved wife **Evelyn**; children **Rodney** and **Roselynn**; sisters **Georgiana C. Yu**, **Linda Y. Walker**, **Diana Y. Chua**, and **Lydia Y. Yu**; nephews, nieces, and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His cremated remains are at the Santuario de San Jose, Greenhills East, Mandaluyong.

Interment will be on Thursday, July 5, 2001 at Christ the King Church, Green Meadows Avenue, Quezon City after the 9:30 a.m. memorial service at Santuario de San Jose.

Please omit flowers.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.
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❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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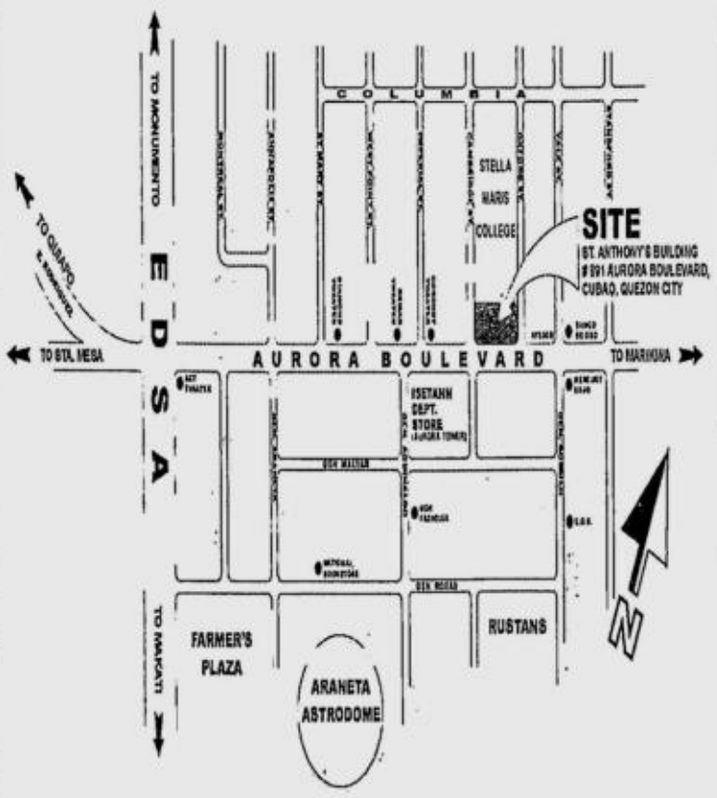

Our Dearly Beloved

ROSARIO "CHADI" ROSALES

Peacefully joined our Lord on July 1, 2001
at the age of 73.

Her loving nephew and niece **Jun** and **Nina Malvar**; and granddaughter **Ria Malvar**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal rest of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, July 4, 2001, at the Manila Memorial Park after the 2:00 PM Mass.

JUANA BALDOVINO ALANDY

of Tayabas, Quezon

Died in the Grace of our Lord on June 30, 2001
at the age of 88.

Her children and their spouses **Talio** and **Cora**, **Talia** (†) and **Toting** (†), **Baby** and **Pepito** (†), **Mel** and **Jun**, **Leslie** and **Emma**, **Cora** and **Pio**, **Mike** and **Marivi**, **Chit** and **Bonnie**; grandchildren and her great grandchildren request the pious readers to pray for the repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Ermita Chapel.

Interment will be on Wednesday, July 4, 2001 at the Lovely Paradise Cemetery after the 9:30 Mass at Minor Basilica Church, Tayabas, Quezon.

Card of Thanks

The family of

A. Timothy Peterson

(January 21, 1940 – June 16, 2001)

His wife — **Patricia B. Licuanan**
children — **Carlo and Andrea**
brothers and their families – **Anthony** and **Lisa**
Thomas, Jan and **David**
Fred, Mary and **Sarah**
mother-in-law — **Virginia Benitez-Licuanan**
brother-in-law and family — **Francisco, Victoria** and **Ana**

thanks all who offered their prayers and comfort.

You have eased the pain of parting and helped us accept God's plan for our beloved Tim — and for us.

CESAR MAGSAYSAY GARCIA

Peacefully joined our Lord
on June 30, 2001 at the age of 94.

His loving wife **Josefina Posadas Garcia**; children **Steve & Jo**, **Nino & Lalie**, **Vic & Yollie**, **Tess & Ernie**; grandchildren and great grandchildren, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Chapel A, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on Wednesday, July 4, 2001 at La Funeraria Paz Crematorium at 1:00 p.m. Mass will be held at 11:00 a.m.

BONIFACIO
RIDGE

a toast to the top

Tuesday, July 3, 2001 marks another milestone for Bonifacio Ridge as it celebrates the topping out of its Phase 1 towers, Cypress Point and Spanish Bay. A prime Global City address, Bonifacio Ridge is a residential project of Fort Bonifacio Development Corporation. Blending its dramatic panorama, together with its state-of-the-art facilities, Bonifacio Ridge is designed to be FBDC's testament to how life should be... boundless, beautiful, brilliant and bountiful.

Now with the structural framework finished, **Bonifacio Ridge** is another step closer to fulfilling its vision of showcasing **the way home should be.** So let's all toast to the top!

For more information, contact the Bonifacio Sales and Marketing Group at 887-1691 / 555-1251.

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LIFESTYLE

CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor

Why women should strength-train

STRENGTH training is exercise using some type of resistance (dumbbells, barbells, machines, rubber bands, body weight, etc.) to build strong muscles. Some people believe only men need to improve their strength, but the truth is women can benefit from having a stronger body, too. In fact, the benefits of strength training go far beyond firm muscles and a shapely body. There are many surprising health benefits you wouldn't expect from lifting weights (the most common form of strength training).

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Aboitiz Juan

Aesthetic benefits

These are the beauty-related benefits. Strength training gives you a tighter, leaner body because a firm muscle is more compact and dense compared to a flabby muscle.

Strength training is an essential part of a weight-control program because the more muscle mass you have, the faster your metabolism. Muscle tissue is more metabolically active than fat tissue. In other words, it burns more calories. One of the reasons women gain weight faster as they get older is muscle atrophy. Muscles that are not challenged by strength training become smaller with age. Smaller muscles means less calories burned every day.

Although a woman cannot hope to increase muscle size as dramatically as a man (women have very little testosterone, the male sex hormone), applying the appropriate strength-training techniques can put a little muscle bulk when it is needed to create a more symmetrical figure. For example, if a woman has narrow shoulders and big hips, the shoulders can become a little wider so the hips don't look so big. Conversely, if a woman has thin legs, strength training can make them a little fuller so the lower body matches the bigger upper body.

The secret is basically in the amount of weight you lift and how many times you lift it. To make a muscle bigger, choose a weight that you can only lift for six to eight times before your muscles get tired. For firmer muscles without an increase in size, lift a weight light enough that you can lift it 12-20 times before your muscles get fatigued.

Strength training coupled with flexibility training (stretching exercises) can improve posture by making sure that muscles are balanced. For example, stooped, rounded shoulders can be improved by strengthening the muscles at the back of the shoulders and between the shoulder blades while stretching the muscles in the chest and the front of the shoulders. Bad posture does not only increase the risk of injury in the lower back, it also detracts from the beauty of a woman.

Physiological benefits

These are the health benefits you will not see right away and are not obvious to other people:

- Strength training can help prevent osteoporosis because strong muscles equal strong bones. Scientists believe that when a muscle contracts against resistance, the pulling force it exerts on the bones causes the bones to become denser and stronger. Strength training also helps improve balance so unnecessary falls are prevented.
- It can help an older woman cope with osteoarthritis because strong muscles are better able to absorb the stress around the affected joints.
- Although an aerobic type of exercise (walking, cycling, dancing, jogging, etc.) is the most common exercise recommendation for people with high blood pressure, strength training done properly and safely has also been found to help normalize blood pressure.
- Strength training can reduce total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol (the "bad" kind) and improve the ratio of total cholesterol to HDL (the "good" kind).
- Postmenopausal women tend to accumulate more fat in their abdomens than in their hips, buttocks and thighs because of the changes in hormone levels. They end up having the same fat distribution pattern as a man—especially the storage of visceral fat. This kind of fat is not found under the skin (this is called subcutaneous fat), but around the abdominal organs. It has been associated with a higher risk of heart disease. Research has found that strength training can significantly reduce visceral or intra-abdominal fat in older women.
- Researchers have discovered that strength training can also help to keep insulin levels normal, which can reduce the risk for type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

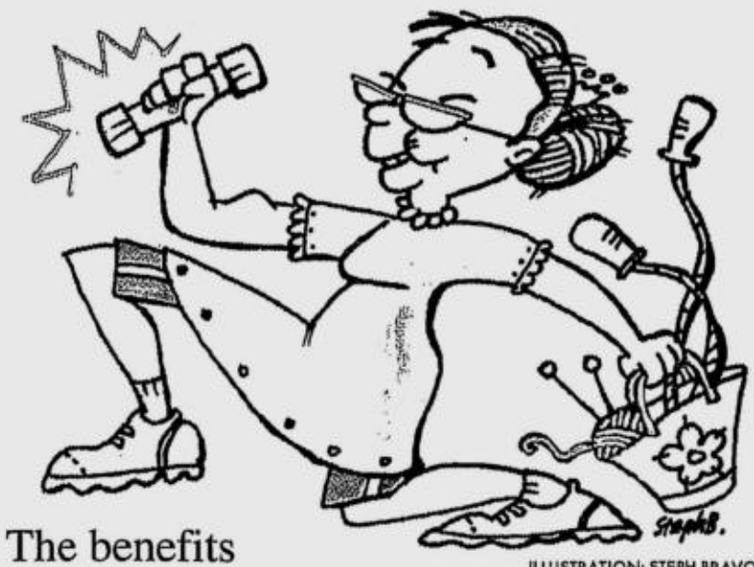


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

> The benefits of strength training go far beyond firm muscles and a shapely body. It's also one of the ways to live out the golden years in a dignified manner

Psychological benefits

Studies show that having a strong body improves self-confidence and self-esteem in women. Aside from knowing that you look good, knowing that you can take care of yourself physically is a great morale booster.

You cannot separate the body from the mind or vice versa. When you are depressed, it shows in the way you walk and the way you hold yourself. When you are feeling physically weak, you also feel emotionally and mentally down. Strengthening your body helps to strengthen your mind and emotions.

Independent golden years

This is the one benefit of strength training I always keep in mind when I lift weights. Since I come from a family of people who live long, I will probably make it to my late 90s. For so long as my mind remains intact, I want to make sure I will be a strong and healthy old woman who doesn't need anyone to give her a bath or help her out of a chair or feed her. Strength training is one of the ways I am going to be able to live out my golden years in an independent, dignified manner.

* * *

Attention all gym owners and managers: Lifefitness Academy is back. This two-day seminar will be held on July 12 and 13 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel. David Welsh, one of the industry's leading management presenters, will talk on "Creating a Winning Team, Success Through Effective People Management." Call Doris at 826-0751/2781.

* * *

The Association of Fitness Professionals of the Phils. is holding a Red Cross CPR Certification on July 21 at the Bahay ng Alumni, UP Diliman campus. CPR certification is a requirement for those taking the American Council on Exercise Examinations on Oct. 27. Call Lorna Pinzon at 842-0567 for reservations since space is limited to only 36 people.

For past articles and exercises, visit my website at www.tinajuanfitness.com

The aging process and menopause

BY MILA S. ALORA

HAVING hot flushes and night sweats? Irritable most of the time? Depressed for no reason at all? Cannot remember even the simple task done a few minutes ago or the name of the household help? These are a few of the many health complaints of women aged 45 and up.

Alumni and sorority reunions are now filled with women comparing notes on one's health, the various illnesses affecting the bones, breasts and uterus, the memory pills being taken and the many effects of menopause in their daily lives.

But then men have the same thing, too. Only it is called by a different name—andropause, at times called "midlife crisis." It is often characterized by a decrease in the sex drive, crankiness and at times, lack of energy in doing anything at all.

Both sexes are going through a climacteric period, which is a normal part of the aging process. Climacteric refers to the time when both males and females have declining hormonal functions. For women, it encompasses the time before the total stop of menstruation, and for men, it is androgen deficiency.

What exactly is menopause? It is the time when a woman stops her monthly bleeding or menstruation for a year, and changes occur in the body—both before and after. The ovaries that produce important hormones needed to stay healthy suddenly come to a halt. These hormones are estrogen, progesterone and testosterone.

Menopause has three phases. Perimenopause begins in the middle to late 40s and can last 5-7 years and monthly period becomes irregular. Menopause marks the end of monthly bleeding and a major decline in estrogen production. Postmenopause consists of early and postmenopause, which can be five years or so after menopause. The lack of estrogen leads to silent physical changes detrimental to one's health if left unchecked.

In general, most women have menopause between the ages of 45-55. For Filipinas, the mean age is 47 and largely hereditary.

What to do

"Growing old gracefully and healthy are the dreams of everyone past the age of 40, whether male or female. Certainly not impossible but would take into account a lot of work and determination," said Dr. Joan Tan-Garcia, section chief of the Climacteric Clinic or Menopause Clinic of St. Luke's Medical Center, which opened in 1998.

Dr. Tan-Garcia pointed out that for women undergoing menopause, there are important considerations. These are the physical makeup of individuals, the family's medical history, lifestyle and overall attitude toward aging.

As head of one of the first private climacteric clinics in the Philippines, Dr. Tan-Garcia has seen the growing acceptance among modern Filipinas of the help offered by science. This was shown by the increased attendance and enthusiastic response of women who have gone through the free quarterly forum conducted by the clinic and being well-informed on the subject through mass communications. There are also invitations by various women's groups including nuns for the clinic to give educational talks on menopause.

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

> Growing old gracefully and healthy takes a lot of work and determination

An average of 20-30 female patients visit the SLMC's Menopause Clinic per month. For a comprehensive care program, the package cost is P6,800 for outpatients, which includes exams, lab tests and counseling.

Before any medicine is prescribed to any patient, a complete physical examination is done to prevent any contraindication. At the same time, thorough interviews are done as to one's personal and family medical history.

More than 13 tests are conducted. Prominent among them are mammography, dexa (X-ray of the bone), complete blood count, ultrasound (transvaginal for the sexually active and married women, F2 transrectal with pelvic for those who are not, F3 of gall bladder and liver for those hysterectomized), lipid profile, alkaline phosphatase, SGPT and calcium.

The decreased production of female hormones may lead to osteoporosis; an increase in cardiovascular diseases; the once taut and thick skin becomes thinner, drier and wrinkles appear; urine retention becomes difficult with the relaxation of the abdominal and urinal tract muscles. The temporary change in body temperature causes the common complaints of hot flushes and night sweats.

Others may suffer psychological problems such as mood swings where Mommy suddenly becomes "high blood *na naman*" if not "*masungit*" and Daddy gets to be easily irritated by trifle matters. There is depression and the feeling of being unloved which may cause sleeplessness and fatigue.

As to the recommended treatments, Dr. Tan-Garcia mentioned the use of HRT, a change of diet and lifestyle. Drinking 10-12 glasses of water, quitting smoking, exercising, watching one's weight and eating less of red meat will go a long way in alleviating the discomforts brought by menopause.

For those who want to go natural, eating *taho* or any soya-based product helps, like what the Okinawans do. In a seven-year study billed The Okinawa Program by Dr. Bradley Wilcox Jr. and featured on the "Oprah" show, Okinawans have a daily intake of tofu and drink tea at least six times a day, which make the inhabitants of the tiny Japanese island free of the symptoms of menopause.

HRT side effects

Addressing the concerns of many as to the side effects of Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) like cancer and weight gain, the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages. However, it is not for everyone.

It is only given on a case to case basis depending on the results of the physical examination and interview. Problems may vary and treatments are individualized. Those with a genetic predisposition to cancer should consult a doctor first before going on a HRT program. As to weight gain, a notable increase of 3-5 pounds was noticed for the first-time users but gradually disappeared after sometime. But whether on HRT or not, the tendency to gain weight will always be there because of the slowing down of one's metabolism as one advances in age.

"It should be noted that menopausal and postmenopausal women can now take advantage of the many scientific researches done on HRT. Using them can help restore the feeling of well-being," Dr. Tan-Garcia said.

How safe and affordable are HRT products?

There is a wide selection of HRT products. Some are in tablet form good for 30 days with each tablet taken once a day and costing anywhere from P4-P7 once a day. For high-risk women or those suffering from certain diseases, there is the recommended skin patch.

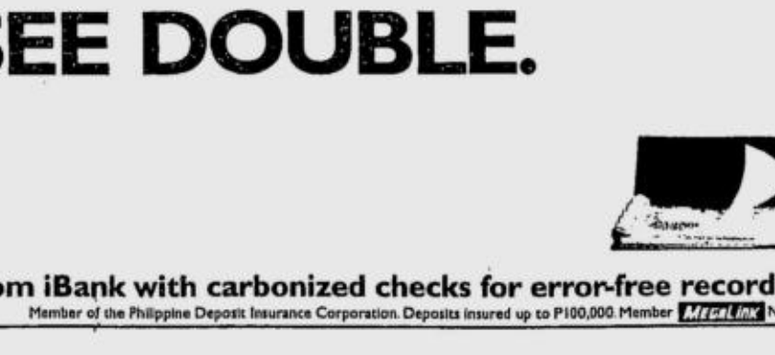
The combination of HRT with other medicines like calcium and lipid-lowering agents can help hypertensive individuals. Diabetics also benefit from it but definitely not people with liver problems.

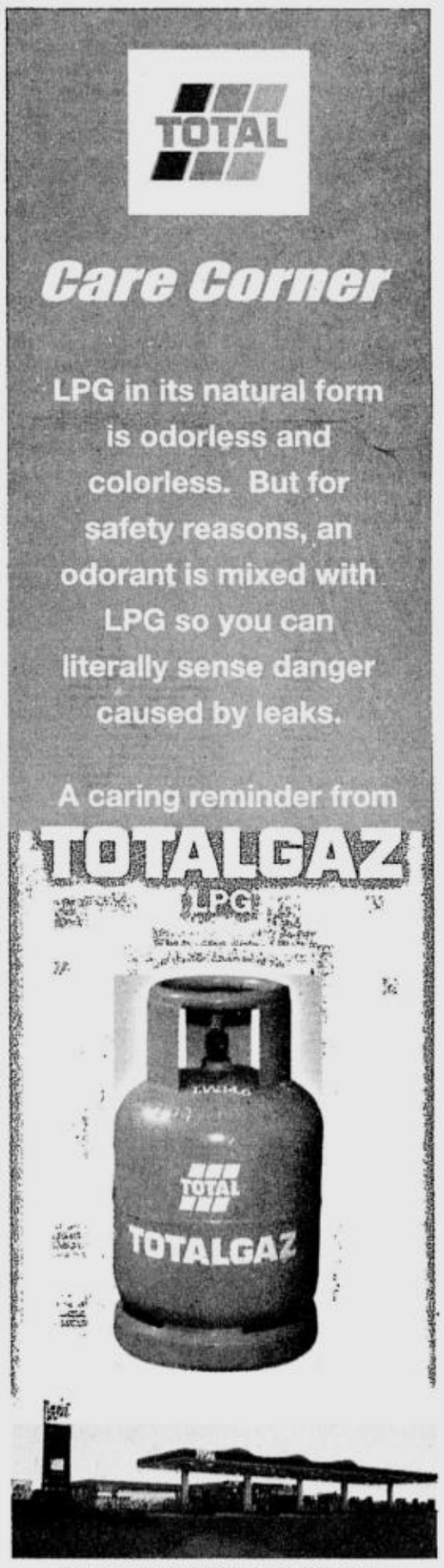
Those who do want HRT can take Selective Estrogen Receptor Modulator (SERM), which is tissue specific. It reduces the risk of invasive breast cancer.

In general, using HRT can help prevent osteoporosis and bone loss, heart attacks and strokes, colon cancer and improve short-term memory. Genitourinary problems usually associated with old age are reduced.

Again, like the Okinawans who celebrate age 55 with a big feast because it signals the transition to full adulthood, menopause does not mean the end of having a good life and enjoying it to the fullest.

Dr. Joan Tan-Garcia finished her obstetrics-gynecology residency at UP-PGH. She has extensive postgraduate training in obstetrics and gynecology in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore. She has attended numerous seminars and congresses on aging in Japan, Australia, Europe and the United States. She can be contacted at 723-0301 to -20 local 7286.





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Danny dugong makes his pitch

BY ALEX Y. VERGARA

LIKE all mammals, dugongs or sea cows breathe air through their lungs. They also breastfeed their young. Unlike the whale, they don't venture out into the open sea. Instead, these gentle creatures thrive in warm, shallow coastal areas where they rest by day and graze on sea grass by night. They swim alone or in groups and can be quite playful and affectionate with one another. For nearly 60 million years, they lived in peace having no known predators until—you guessed it—people came into the scene.

Through Hong Kong-Shanghai Banking Corp.'s "Hug Me, Save Me" campaign, mallers, especially kids, are beginning to learn more about this endangered specie. For every P300-purchase at any Body Shop outlet, shoppers using their HSBC credit cards can choose from among 10 cuddly dugong characters for free.

Each stuffed toy (never mind if some are way off the bluish-gray color of a dugong) comes with a small card that provides a tidbit of information about the animal. What's more, HSBC makes an automatic donation in behalf of the shopper to the bank's Dugong Conservation Program. Those who choose to pay in cash or use other credit cards can also bring home a collectible for P100. The money they give goes to the program as well.

There's Dexter clad in a black basketball shirt and holding an orange ball with his right flipper. Dugongs, the card says, use their flippers to hug and touch objects with, even the anchor lines of boats. They can also be seen tumbling under water or scratching their backs on a huge rock.

Then there are sweethearts Danny and Demi. Thanks to a pair of built-in snaps on their flippers, the couple can be arranged in a hugging position. Like best friends Dindy and Dana, each figure is sold separately.

Or what about cool dude Dave in a tie-dyed shirt and clasping a surfboard? Dugongs are among the most widely distributed "sirenians" in the world, antedating the legend of Dyesebel by several million years. Their cousins, the more famous manatee, another threatened sirenian, are found in the Western Hemisphere.

Shy mammals

Full-grown dugongs can grow up to three meters and weigh up to 350 kilos. They feed exclusively on sea grass, with adults mowing down close to 300 kilos of grass a day. Despite their size, however, they rarely show themselves to landlubbers. These shy marine mammals widely distributed along coastal areas across the Pacific and Indian Oceans usually swim away when disturbed.

Dugongs can live up to 60 years. They usually give birth to just one calf every three to five years. The gestation period can take up to 13 months. Since a mommy dugong's breasts are located under each of its flipper, the mother appears to hug its young while nursing it. Shared parenting is unheard of.

Records show dugongs thrived all over the Philippines, even in the once-pristine waters of Manila Bay. These days only the coasts off Palawan, Eastern Luzon, Southern and Eastern Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago hold viable populations of dugong.

Indeed, the presence or absence of such creatures is a clear indication of the state of our seas. Expectedly, pollution and dynamite fishing have contributed greatly to the animal's near extinction.

Like dolphins, not a few dugongs have drowned while struggling to free themselves from fishing nets. Those caught alive are often slaughtered for their meat. Past attempts to bottle-feed orphaned dugongs have often failed. Some dugongs die from indirect causes. Erosion, for instance, deprives sea grass of much-needed sunlight and oxygen to thrive.

Global concerns

"Education and the environment are two of HSBC's global concerns," says Laine Santana, HSBC's director for corporate communications. Apart from various education-related projects, the bank has an ongoing environmental-awareness program dubbed "Save the Seas" based in Samal Island off the coast of Davao.

"One of the most important but also most neglected resources in the country is the sea," adds Santana. HSBC found this ironic since the Philippines is an archipelago, its people dependent on the sea's bounties.

Of course, awareness generated by such adorable mascots has its limits. To put some teeth to its project, HSBC is funding a P2-million dugong conservation program on Green Island Bay off the northern coast of Palawan. The bank has tapped the World Wildlife Foundation (WWF) to implement it.

Arnel Andrew Yaptinchay, director of WWF Phils., identified the area where a sizable number of dugongs has been spotted. "It's impossible to determine how many dugongs are still left in the country," he admits.

Yaptinchay, a licensed veterinarian, wouldn't be surprised if their present number continues to dwindle unless some drastic measures are put into place. Unfortunately, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources has yet to declare a dugong sanctuary to help protect and promote public awareness about the animal.

"Although they're not a targeted specie," he adds, "some people still hunt the dugong for its supposed medicinal properties." Ironically, hunters have begun loosing interest in the dugong. Why? They're becoming harder to find. "It's not worth their time and effort anymore."

Conservation measures

"Our main objective is to drum up awareness on the dugong," says Santana. "We can't do this without the direct involvement of the area's fisherfolk."

Aside from tapping the local government's assistance, Yaptinchay and his team will try to get the community involved. Rather than dictate a litany of dos and don'ts, which is bound to fail anyway, they'll try to get as much feedback as possible from various sectors.

After all, biodiversity is such a big word, its supposed benefits or effects drowned out by the everyday concerns of subsistence fishermen. "We can't just go there and arbitrarily establish a protected area," says Yaptinchay. "Remember, the bay has become so much a part of their lives. They need to be given a say in determining their future. Only then will they be able to fully appreciate such measures in conservation."

It pays to start 'em young. Based on Yaptinchay's experience as a former director of DENR's marine turtle conservation project, one of the most effective ways to reach out to adults is through their children. Hopefully, these informed youngsters will become the future custodians of the environment. Most teachers are usually open to environmental education as well.

"The project's success and long-term sustainability will depend on the community," says Santana. The project will run for one year beginning this month. "We will try to be as flexible as possible," adds Yaptinchay. "Hopefully, Green Island Bay will become a protected area in the future."

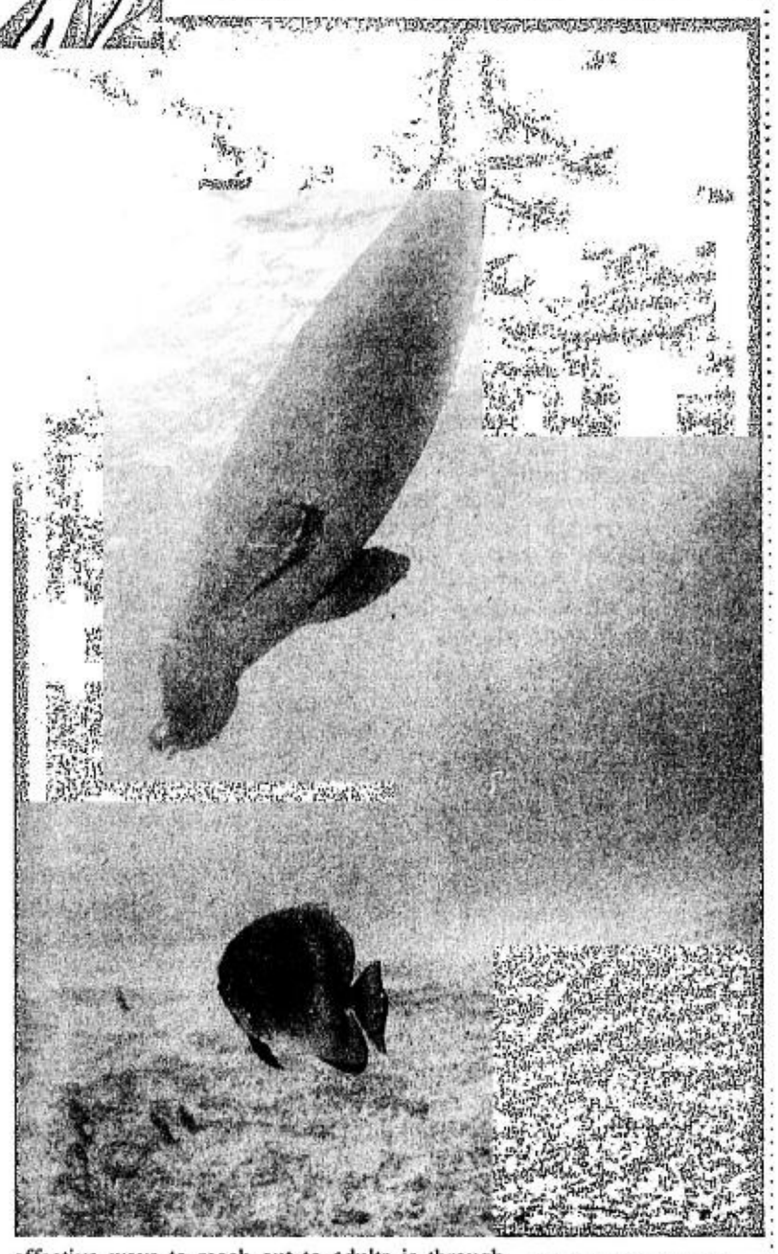
It wouldn't hurt, of course, if Yaptinchay and his team bring loads of stuffed toys to the site, four hours away by land from Puerto Princesa. The kids at Green Island Bay, like their counterparts in the malls, will be informed as well as delighted to have such dugong collectibles.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer. com.ph

MEEK AND MILD. Rescued dugongs, such as this calf pictured with AA Yaptinchay, are sent back to the wilds as soon as they're ready. HSBC

Through HSBC's campaign to save dugongs from extinction, kids and adults learn more about these gentle creatures

HUG ME, SAVE ME. Dugong collectible Danny and Demi embrace each other like you and me. PHOTOS BY ERNIE SARMIENTO



BLUE WORLD. The once-numerous dugongs are now threatened with extinction. HSBC

DUGONGS, like Dexter, are playful creatures

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New Corporate Member

IBM Solutions Delivery, Inc., one of the leading solutions provider in the information technology industry today signed its corporate agreement with MEDICard for the healthcare program of their employees and dependents last June 28, 2001 at the Grilla Restaurant in Libis, Quezon City. (Seated L - R) Ignatio E. Sevilla, III (Division Manager-Sales and ITS Operations), Paul A. Zaldarriaga, (President & Managing Director), Dr. Nicanor D. Montoya (MEDICard President), Luis S. Montoya (EVP & GM). (Standing L - R) Laureano F. Francisco, Jr. (ISDI HRD Manager), Jose T. Marcos, (ISDI Division Manager-Management Services), Ma. Lourdes R. Saculles, (ISDI Chief Finance Officer), Leah F. Lina (ISDI Sr. HR Coordinator), Amy C. Cuyugan (MEDICard Account Executive) and Voltaire R. Victoria (MEDICard Marketing and Sales Manager)

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. HV Dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For membership inquiries, please call 810-2399 and look for Ms. Joy Mendiola. TEXT MEDICard for your queries: 0917-7518365 (Globe) or 0919-2476240 (Smart). Please don't forget to include your complete name and landline number where MEDICard could reach you. *Log on to www.medicardphils.com*

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Should we establish a separate department of culture?

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

"SO how do you propose to solve our national dilemma and start reforming our flawed Filipino mentality and consciousness that you so well expressed in your article of May 22?"

This is the challenge that several readers hurled at me after "telling us what the problem is with our Filipino thinking." What do we do next?

They are right. Let's stop talking and criticizing if we can't offer any positive solution. So here are my thoughts on the subject.

We can attack the problem on two levels, the micro or individual basis and the macro or national scale. In both cases, the approach should be multisectoral.

On an individual and social level, we can start discussing these issues about our Filipino mentality, values and consciousness in an honest and objective manner. Let's not start blaming anybody or any group. But start from within. Civic and professional groups should focus attention on these topics during their meetings, rather than concentrate on some political or trivial topics like the peculiar manner an ex-senator enunciates her words or that latest love interest of a particular actress.

The mass media, i.e. the producers and writers of television and radio programs, should create new shows that highlight our typical way of thinking about our country and our people and change these to something positive and worthwhile. Newspaper stories should give more space to positive developments, accomplishments and incidents in our country, rather than to corruption, crime, scandals and other negative news. This may eventually help us change our perception about our society and culture and give us some needed hope.

Doable

On a national scale, I would like to bring out something that has been simmering in my mind for a long, long time, which I believe is "doable," as a former president used to say.

I strongly propose that the government establish a separate and independent Department of Culture rather than lump this function under one huge Department of Education, Culture and Sports as it is right now.

DECS has already a lot of problems to tackle as it is. It can't be burdened with further issues involving culture, not to mention sports. That's why these two last functions are dismally neglected. The Secretary of Education has simply no more time to attend to them adequately. His hands are already full.

If we have a separate and independent Department of Culture, like what other countries have, we may at last begin to reform our negative cultural traits and values.

Take France, for example. This European country has a Minister of Culture that studies, analyzes, preserves, interprets and promotes French culture. It ensures that the French way of thinking and way of life will retain its pristine beauty, power and influence over the people. The French take great pride in their culture.

In the Philippines, the function of the Secretary of Culture shall be to study those cultural traits and values that are inimical to our growth and development as a people, and try to establish policies and create programs to counteract them.

The proposed department should promote the more positive side of Filipino culture, especially our indigenous esoteric beliefs and practices, and see how these can be integrated in all aspects of Filipino life, including the family, economy, the arts and government bureaucracy. It can begin to study and define the true Filipino soul, if such a thing exists.

The average educated Filipino seems to be more knowledgeable about western culture than his own. He even gets embarrassed discussing his own Filipino culture and way of life. He thinks erroneously that, "we are never as good as other countries." Have you ever heard or seen any government or private cultural program that promotes our indigenous esoteric culture, our supernatural beliefs and traditions? Does the cultural center ever show anything about our esoteric cultural heritage? But we have plenty of Broadway or Hollywood type of shows and programs.

I do not know where we got this attitude of "xenophilia" or love of things foreign to us. This is why even our locally made products cannot compete with foreign ones. Our own people do not patronize our own products. Don't you think there is something wrong with the way we Filipinos think about ourselves?

We seem to have no sense of national pride, no sense of history and no sense of nationhood. We still think like primitive tribesmen, the tribe of Ilocanos, the Igorots, the Cebuanos, the Warays, the Pampangos, the Tagalogs, etc. Even when abroad, Filipinos, in general, do not identify with the whole country. If there are exceptions to this, they are few and far between.

Cultural pygmy

The problem with the current governmental and private cultural efforts is that their activities and objectives are confined to promoting the exoteric or outward (even borrowed) culture of the Philippines, but they completely neglect the more basic and more important hidden or esoteric indigenous culture of our people. But unless we bring this out and study it and see its importance to our being Filipinos, we will forever be a cultural pygmy in the eyes of the world.

So I propose that legislation be enacted creating the Department of Culture—separate from and independent of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports. And the faster this is done the better for the future of this country.

But whoever is appointed to head this department should have a strong background in the esoteric and indigenous culture of the Philippines, not only a strong sense of nationalism and sense of history for the esoteric or hidden culture is the true measure of any nation's culture, not the outward, mostly borrowed, culture propagated by the traditional purveyors of Philippine culture. Furthermore, its head should have a fixed term of office and should be shielded from political influence and machinations.

These suggestions alone will not bring about an immediate change in our ingrained negative way of thinking, but hopefully it will be the start toward a positive direction and free our people from a feeling of helplessness.

Some people, however, disagree with my proposal. One is my high school classmate who is now a doctor of medicine, a frustrated *balikbayan*, Dr. Roberto Jimenez (brother of well-known but controversial socialite Baby Arenas). Bobby wrote me to say, "No. Another department will not solve anything. Pinoys are masters in the perversion of things when implemented. Take the Party List System, for example. What would help is if we could send some bad people to jail—including those who did the corrupting."

Another dissenter, a lady listener of my radio program, said, "Change can only come from below, from the grassroots and never from the bureaucracy." They both have a point.

I still believe, however, that the change should come from within each and every Filipino, without exception. If we don't heed this call soon, then may God have mercy on our country and our people.

E-mail jlicauco@geocities.com. Visit his website at www.angelfire.com/journal/licauco

SLPMC marks 8th year

ST. Luke's Pain Management Centre celebrates its 8th anniversary from July 9-13 that includes activities such as an exhibit and a free clinic. The highlight of the week-long celebration is a lay forum titled "Real People, Real Pain," on July 10, 9 a.m.-12 nn at the medical center's second floor conference room. Call St. Luke's Pain Management Centre at 723-0301 local 5416.

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HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Tom Cruise, Laura Branigan, Montel Williams, Aaron Tippin, Tom Stoppard, Dave Barry

Happy Birthday: Take time out to smell the roses. You've been working way too hard. It's time to sit back and review. Decide what will make you happy and go after it. It's your turn to shine, so stop waiting for a time when you don't feel obligated to do for others, for that day will never come. Your numbers: 3, 18, 22, 25, 34, 38

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You will be tempted to spend money you don't have. Be careful if you are forced to deal with people who are promising you the world. You need to do a little research before you make a decision.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You will meet romantic possibilities if you get out with friends. Your ability to be mysterious and enticing will make you difficult to resist.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Your best bet will be work today. You can make your point heard if you voice your opinion to superiors. Advancement can be yours for the asking. Don't be afraid to speak your mind.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You will want to exploit your creative talents. Don't worry if someone doesn't like your style. You have to please yourself when it comes to artistic ventures.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't let someone you live with ruin your mood or your day. Stay calm and focus on getting your chores done. Plan to get together with friends who won't provoke you.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You will want to get out with your friends. You need to spend some quality time just reminiscing. You may even want to plan an outing that will include your mate. Travel for pleasure should be on your agenda.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Insincere gestures of friendliness are likely at social functions. Be careful of empty promises concerning business. Avoid joint financial temptations. You would be wise to work on your own.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't be too quick to judge others. You may have invalid information that will cause you to make wrong choices. Self-improvement projects will be successful and satisfying.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Uncertainty regarding your direction is likely. Look into career choices and courses being offered. Beware of individuals who are not reliable or well-known to you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Sudden romantic infatuations could lead to a serious and prosperous connection. If you join intellectual or cultural groups, you will meet individuals who stimulate you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Business trips will appear to be fruitful; however, watch out for empty promises that could end up being quite costly. Don't celebrate before you sign the deal.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Travel plans should be made. You can start self-improvement projects that will enhance your appearance. Avoid letting others influence your decisions. You have to follow your intuition.

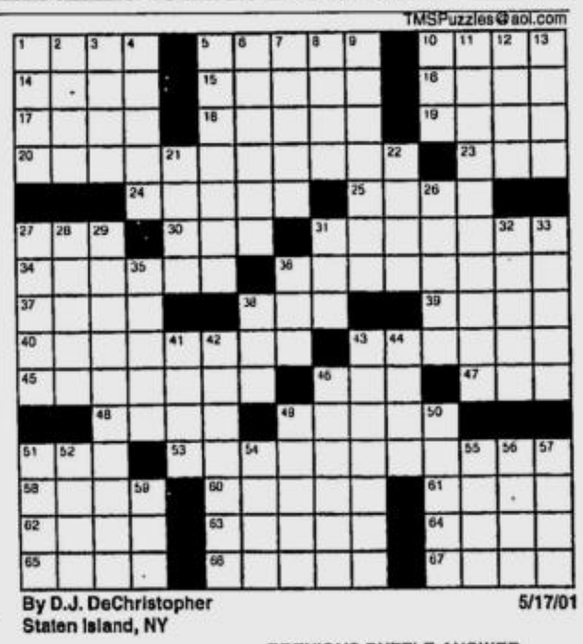
Birthday Baby: You have an insatiable need to discover and will always be traveling down whatever avenue promises to lead to a little adventure. You are bright, outspoken and open-minded.

BEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

MUTTS — BY PATRICK McDONNELL

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



ACROSS
1 Old World duck
5 Temporary cash
10 Use as fuel
14 This place
15 Fawning sycophant
16 Dueling sword
17 Seth's son
18 City on the Ruhr
19 Unclothed
20 Movie set in Texas?
23 Seed packet
24 Wise ones
25 Hidden fence
27 Lacking
30 Remove innards
31 Museum guides
34 German
36 Mossbunker
37 Sailor's saint
38 Long period
39 Bangkok native
40 "Gilligan's Island" co-star
43 Ridiculously incongruous
45 2.1-acre units in South Africa
46 Be penitent
47 Look at
48 Work for
49 Perplexing problem
51 Snaky letter
53 Gunboat diplomacy in Lebanon?
58 Roman acronym
60 Left bed
61 Excessively acid
62 Factual
63 Paramour
64 Cinder ending?
65 Assents asea
66 REM sound?
67 Matched outfits

DOWN
1 Mets stadium
2 Carte du jour
3 Cupid
4 Adam and Mae
5 British weapon
6 Pamper
7 Carpenter's files
8 Novel thought
9 "Gravity's Rainbow" writer
10 Blue or Affleck
11 Vietnamese song?
12 Make over
13 Craving
21 Shakespearean villain
22 For one
26 Warms up
27 Fulton's power
28 Salutation
29 Whimsical composition from Arizona?
31 Retreat
32 Maudlin
33 Maliciously sarcastic
35 Country east of Fiji
36 Skier Tommy
38 Golfer Ernie
41 Alpert or Caen
42 Uses a heating-cooling process
43 Somber and grave
44 Steer flesh
46 Crowd stirrer?
49 Utah city
50 American Beauties
51 Como __ Usted?
52 Chipper
54 Press
55 Play part
56 Quasi-religious group
57 Time periods
59 Notes of scales

By D.J. DeChristopher
Staten Island, NY
5/17/01

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

C	O	S	T	S		A	L	D	A		D	C	C	C
O	M	A	H	A		C	O	A	T		A	R	I	L
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A	R	C		T	H	E	M	I	L	K	Y	W	A	Y
		H	A	R	E	S			L	O	S	E	R	S
S	C	E	N	E	S		S	A	S	H				
P	O	E	T		S	T	A	G		L	O	C	K	S
A	L	S	O		E	A	T	E	N		T	R	I	O
T	E	E	N	S		P	A	S	O		H	E	R	B
				A	M	E	N		B	R	E	A	K	S
T	R	I	A	G	E			A	L	A	R	M		
B	U	T	T	E	R	F	L	I	E	S		P	B	S
O	R	E	S		L	A	I	R		H	O	U	R	I
N	A	M	E		I	D	L	E		E	L	F	I	N
E	L	S	A		N	E	T	S		S	A	F	E	S

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